No. 802
Friday
11 Sept. '92

PRIVATE EYE

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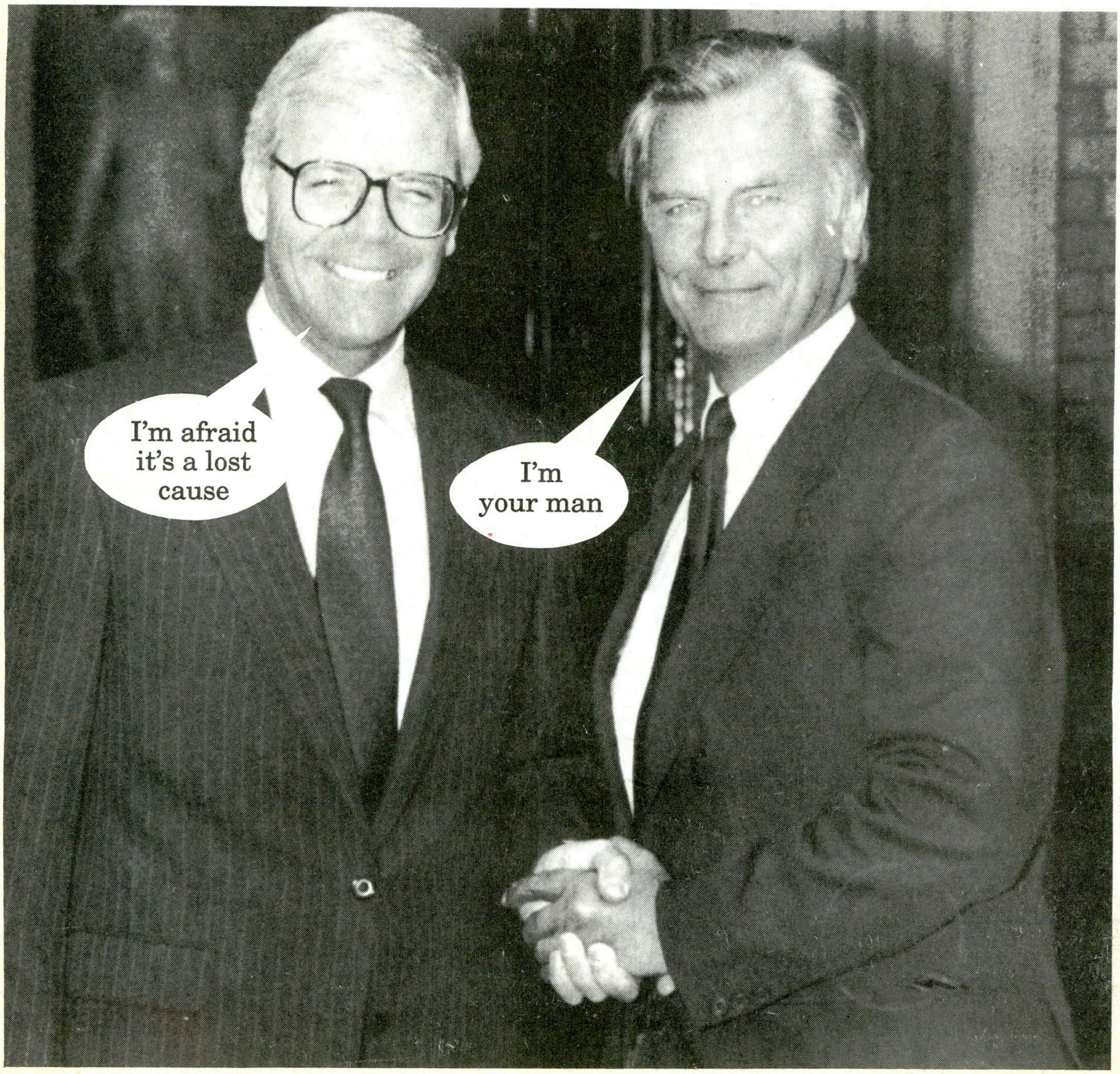
YUGOSLAVIA

LATEST



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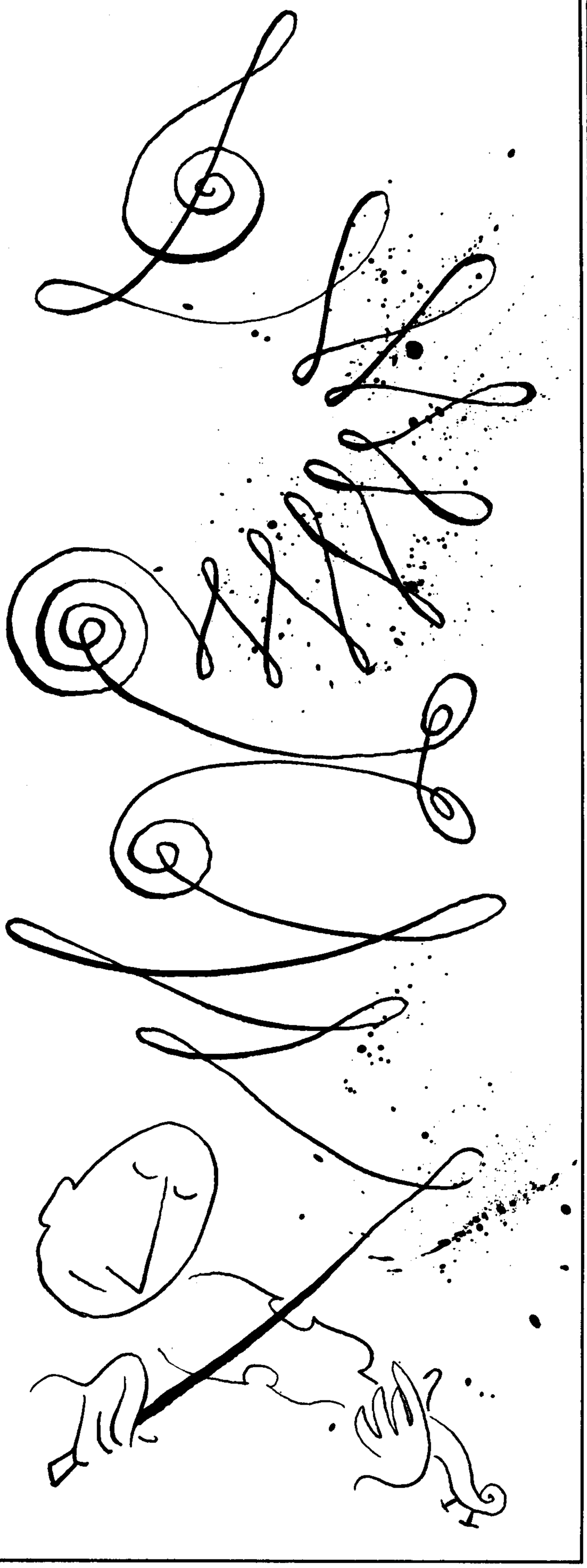
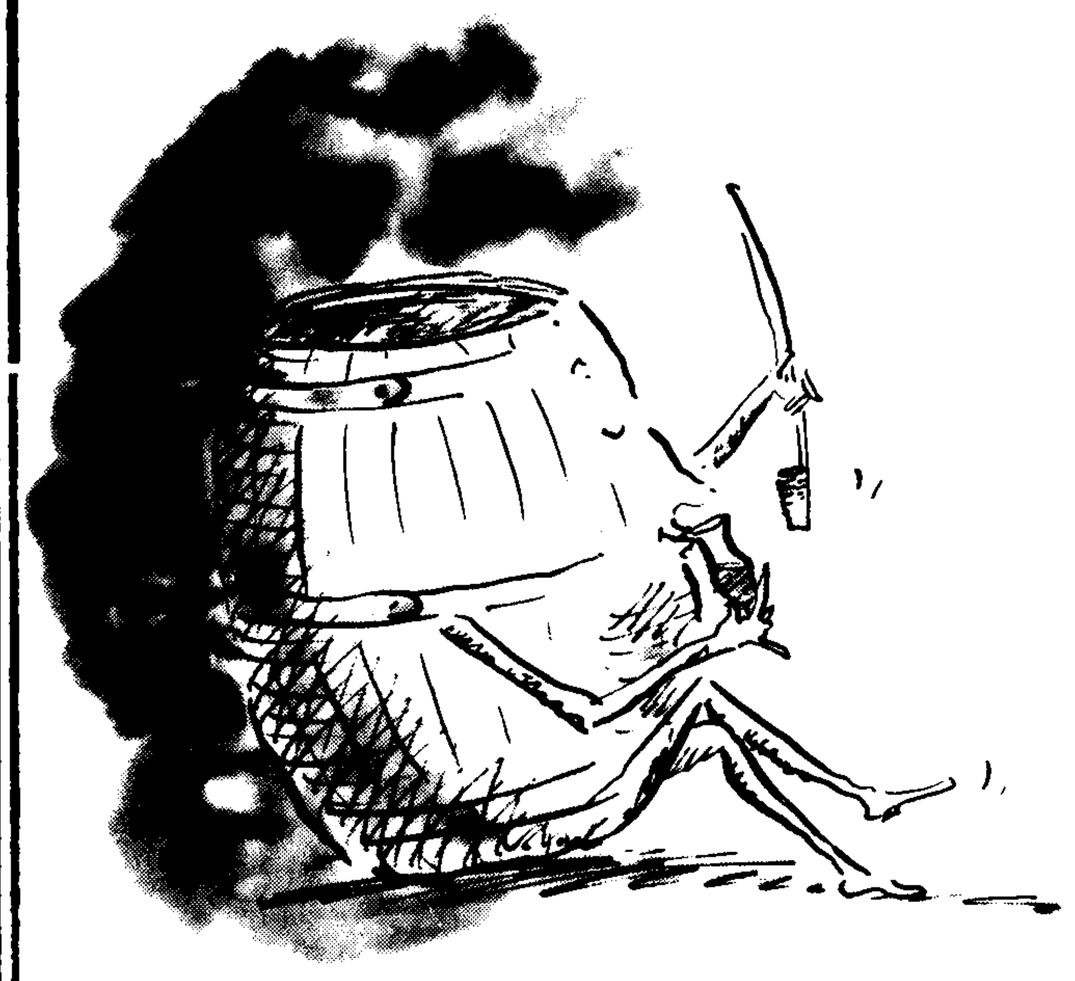


Bodega Language.



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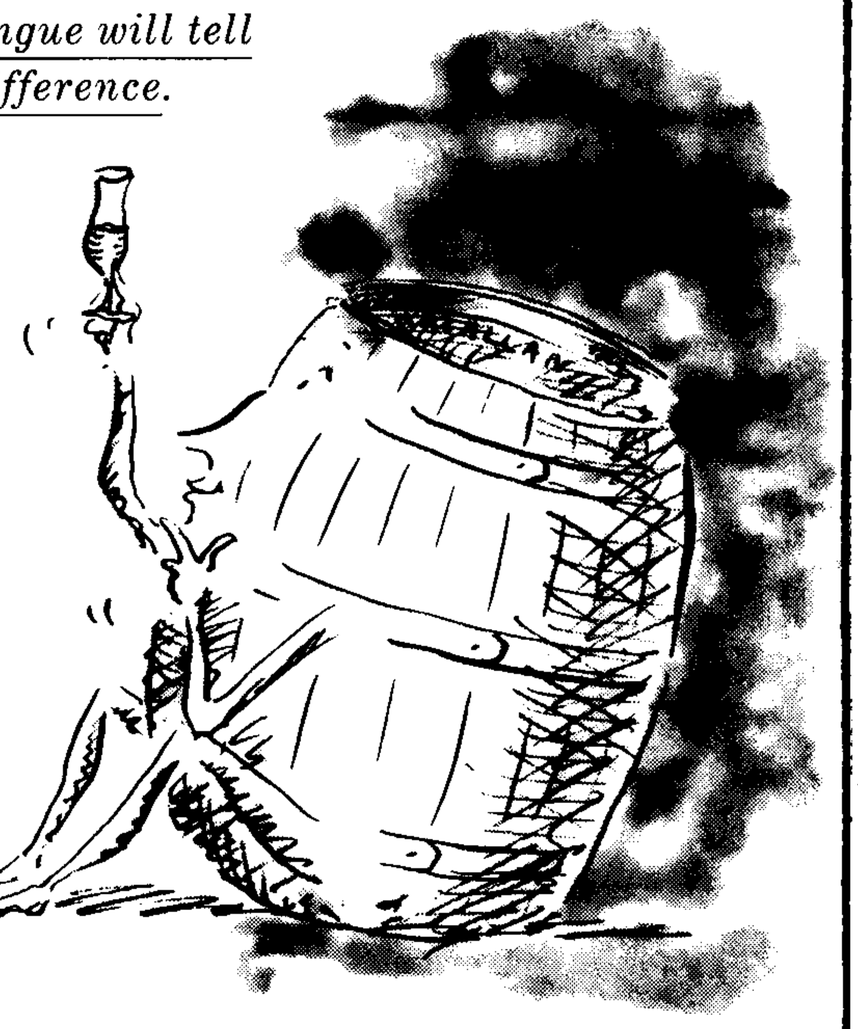

The Macallan. The Malt.

Gnome

I AM sorry to see that my organ has been criticised for the story printed last week under the heading SHAME OF KINKY BBC MAN NOGGIS.

It is alleged by certain of my rivals that the story was of little or no public interest.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Mr Ralph Noggis, 63, with whom the story was primarily concerned, is well known as presenter of Anglia TV's monthly Sunday afternoon programme *International Clock Golf*, which is widely networked in Cumbria.

Mr Noggis is therefore a public figure of considerable importance whose private behaviour more than justifies the surveillance of seventeen reporters over a period of eight years at an estimated cost to the Gnome Organisation of £94,000.

I need hardly add that Mr Noggis's perverse activities must be utterly repugnant to all decent people throughout the world.

E. Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
c/o Miss Whiplash
479 Filth Street
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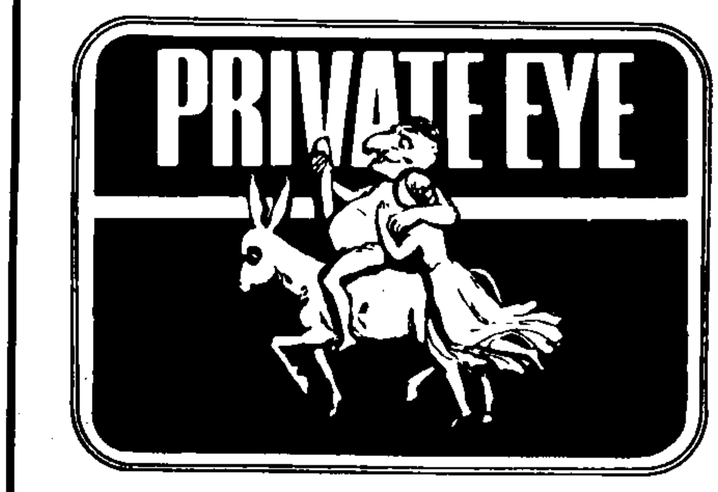


COLOUR SECTION

STERLING devaluation is no longer a question of if, but when. As in 1967 a few select and trusted hacks have been secretly briefed that the Government now realises there can be no sustained economic recovery with the pound at its present level.

Thus the French referendum on Maastricht and what happens to German interest rates are mere diversions. The fundamental problem is the balance of payments, which will deteriorate sharply once any kind of recovery gets under way.

In order to stimulate UK exports and choke off imports, the pound, if it were once again allowed to find its own level, must (and would) fall by up to 20 percent. It may not be possible to agree such a large drop within the European exchange rate mechanism, but the Government could get away with a "temporary" withdrawal, accompanied (as it would be) by the desperately-needed sharp cut in UK interest rates.

Any political embarrassment would soon vanish. After all, the opposition is strongly committed to slashing interest rates and on European policy has not got a leg to stand on.

THERE was an unexpected stroke of luck for Lord Justice Bingham, recently appointed master of the rolls, when he was grappling with the complex accounts of the Bank of Commerce and Credit International.

Mr. E.W. ("Tim") Hoult, the partner at accountant Price Waterhouse responsible for auditing the books of the crooked bank, was an exact contemporary of Bingham's at the northern public school of Sedbergh.

When Bingham was head of Winder House, the dashing Hoult was head of School House. Both boys were prefects together and got on famously. Lord Bingham's report has not been published and probably won't be.

ANYONE wishing to write a private letter to Professor Paul Wilkinson, the Government's favourite academic expert on terrorism and "chairman of international relations" at St Andrew's university, the cradle of Thatcherite intellectuals, should beware.

He may well send copies of his reply to the foreign secretary, the minister for aviation and the lord advocate too.

In March Pamela Dix, whose brother died in the Lockerbie air crash, wrote to the *Guardian* to protest about the hysteria in Britain and the United States about the two Libyan airline officials suspected of playing a part in the bombing of the aircraft. She criticised, among other things, the "holier than thou attitude" of both governments "given actions such as the 1986 bombing of Libya for terrorist offences now laid at Libya's door".

She was surprised three days later to see a letter in the *Guardian* by Prof Wilkinson which seemed in her view to represent the gung-ho goonery of both the US and UK governments. So she wrote a private letter to the professor. She explained she was "not seeking to exonerate Libya", but went on: "It is more than disappointing to relatives that the questions of who ordered the bombing, what was the motive and who paid for it remain unanswered more than three years after the disaster."

A week later she received a long letter from Wilkinson ending with a lecture: "It is a great pity that some people seem more concerned to castigate their own governments' efforts and to provide evasions for Libya than to concentrate on the fundamental rights of the victims of Lockerbie and their families."

To her astonishment, Pamela Dix noticed that Wilkinson had copied this pompous note to Douglas Hurd, foreign secretary, two other ministers, John Prescott, then Labour's spokesman on transport, and Jim Swire of the Lockerbie Families Group. When she wrote to Wilkinson to complain he replied blandly: "I am afraid I fell into the error of assuming that your original letter was written on behalf of the Families Group, and that you wished to raise these important questions with the authorities."

This is not the first such error by the blundering professor. In 1987, when *Channel Four News* was running a series of programmes about the former army information officer Colin Wallace, Wilkinson, then at Aberdeen university, wrote to David Mannion, the acting news editor at C4, enclosing an anonymous letter received by "one of our researchers on the Colin Wallace affair". The letter contained an absurd and discredited smear about Wallace's private life.

When Wallace heard of the smear, he wrote to the principal of Aberdeen demanding to know why it had been circulated to the media on university notepaper. The professor was obliged to grovel. He wrote to the editors of all newspapers: "The claims made in the letter are totally untrue. I therefore offer Mr Wallace a full apology, and I would give the widest possible circulation to a complete retraction."

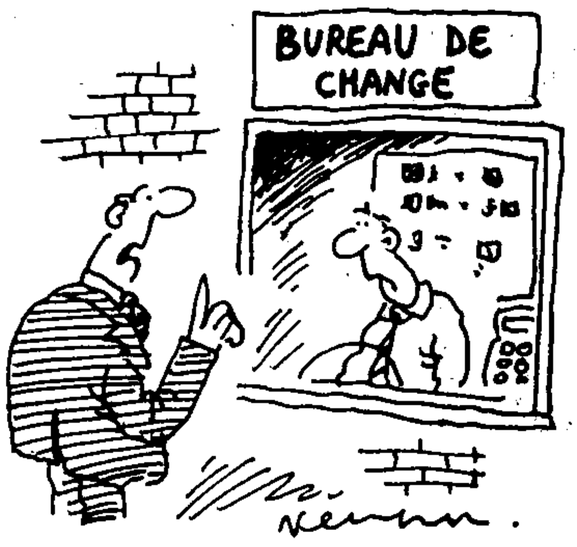
MICHAEL BAKI, a Syrian who has lived in the United Kingdom for many years, had damages of £400,000 awarded against him in the high court last July in an action for defamation brought by Wafic Said, fellow Syrian, mega-rich arms dealer and close friend of Mark Thatcher.

Said, who as *Eye* readers will recall was represented by the greedy firm of Peter Carter-Fuck and Partners, told the jury that he would not pursue any damages awarded. But he said nothing about the costs.

Baki and his wife have no income save a disability benefit of around £106 per week, and a joint family home which they are trying to sell as they cannot keep up the mortgage payments.

Carter-Fuck was required to "tax" his huge bill, which still came to an astronomical £129,000; but this is of academic interest to Baki as he has no money. (Even before his appearance before the taxing master, Carter-Fuck had reduced the bill by some £50,000.)

At the trial evidence was given on Said's behalf attesting to his charitable disposition, and two high Tories said he was a very generous man. It would seem that his generosity does not extend to Baki. If it did, it would be most unlikely that Said would permit a man with teenage children and a heart condition to lose his house over what must be a trivial amount of money for a very wealthy arms dealer.



"How's the wobble doing against the jitter?"

ONLY A FEW weeks ago, in the wake of revelations about her affair with Minister of Fun David Mellor, Antonia de Sancha declared in an interview with the *Indescribablyboring* that her life was in ruins and that she felt like a "caged animal". The reason she chose *The Indescribablyboring* was that she did not wish to be accused of being a kiss-and-tell merchant.

Now the *Sun* has run an exclusive series about her affair with Mellor, though the impression has been given that it is not Antonia herself who has kissed and told but a friend of hers, Joanna Horaim Ashbourn. Thus Ms de Sancha hopes people will regard her as an honourable woman for remaining silent.

The truth of the matter is that the *Sun* bought the series through Antonia's agent, the egregious Max Clifford, who had failed to persuade the *News of the Screws* to cough up £50,000 for it. The *Sun* paid considerably less than £50,000 and the *Sun* hackette whose by-line appears above the reports, Caroline Graham, went abroad with Clifford and Ms de Sancha to debrief the lady about her own debriefing at the hands of Mellor. What Joanna Horaim Ashbourn's role was, other than to allow her name to be published as a cover for Antonia's scandalous indiscretions, is unclear.

Then into the scene wandered the inept Sir Timothy Bell, who has been advising Mellor since the scandal broke. It was Bell who was responsible for the ridiculous family photocall and who drafted Judith Mellor's letter of complaint to the *Mirror* over that paper's coverage of her eye condition. Last Friday evening Kelvin McKenzie was phoned by former partner-in-crime Tinkerbell, who proceeded to abuse McKenzie on Mellor's behalf. Bell's belligerence so incensed McKenzie he has decided never to speak to the nasally-challenged PR man again.

Despite one story in the papers quoting Max Clifford to the effect that Ms de Sancha has earned £50,000 from interviews, endorsements and pictures, her balance sheet has not been impressive. When the *Mail on Sunday* printed her tasteful "love-story" interview, it insisted it must have exclusive rights. When it found interviews and pictures were appearing all over the place, it cancelled the contract (worth roughly £20,000). Next, the *Mirror* bought photographic rights to de Sancha on holiday in Barbados only to find that the *Screws* had been tipped off and had flown in a team from Florida, snatched some pics and published them. So the *Mirror* also declined to pay up. Now, at last, Ms de Sancha has received her 29 pieces of silver.

PS: In a strange and baffling incident, both Max Clifford and *Sun* hackette Caroline Graham lost their contact lenses together on the same day in the South of France hide-out. How did this come about? No one seems to know...

THE FIRST edition of the *Sun* on Saturday 29 August carried the front-page headline: DI AGONY AT 'CUDDLE PHOTOS'. **By the second edition it was** DIANA'S PAL IN LOVE LETTER BATTLE **with the earlier "world exclusive" banished inside. Why?**

Step forward Andrew Knight, acquiescent chief apologist for Rupert Murdoch and his Wapping titles.

The gist of the *Sun*'s first edition by royal hack Robert Jobsworth was that the next day, Sunday, the *Sun*'s sister rag, the *News of the Screws*, would be publishing "intimate photographs" of Diana and Life Guards officer, Major James Hewitt. But come Sunday the photos did not appear. Knight had caved in and halted their publication after receiving agitated calls from Buckingham Palace.

Knight's intervention incensed editors at the *Screws* who have been shown to be mere lickspittles not in charge of what goes into their paper. Inmates at the *Sun* are also enraged because they published a "royal exclusive" that collapsed because those at the *Screws* didn't have the guts to tell Knight where to put it.

Since the episode there have been intriguing reports of a revolt brewing against Knight's editorial meddling. Hacks at Wapping are increasingly irritated by his role as chief apologist. After the general election, Knight went on BBC television to put the indefensible case that the *Sun* and the other Tory tabloids were not grotesquely anti-Labour.

He also wrote a ludicrous letter to the *Guardian* along similar lines, and then he wrote to the *Spectator* defending Andrew Neil and the *Sunset Times* for publishing extracts from Andrew Morton's Diana book and affirming Oz-Yankee-British Murdoch's spiritual affinity with the monarchy. He also boasted of suppressing stories — such as the "Squidgy" love-tape — which might damage the monarchy.

Now the *Sun* has plucked up the courage to defy Knight by publishing the Squidgy transcript, will there be a full-scale insurrection against the gruesome Knight?

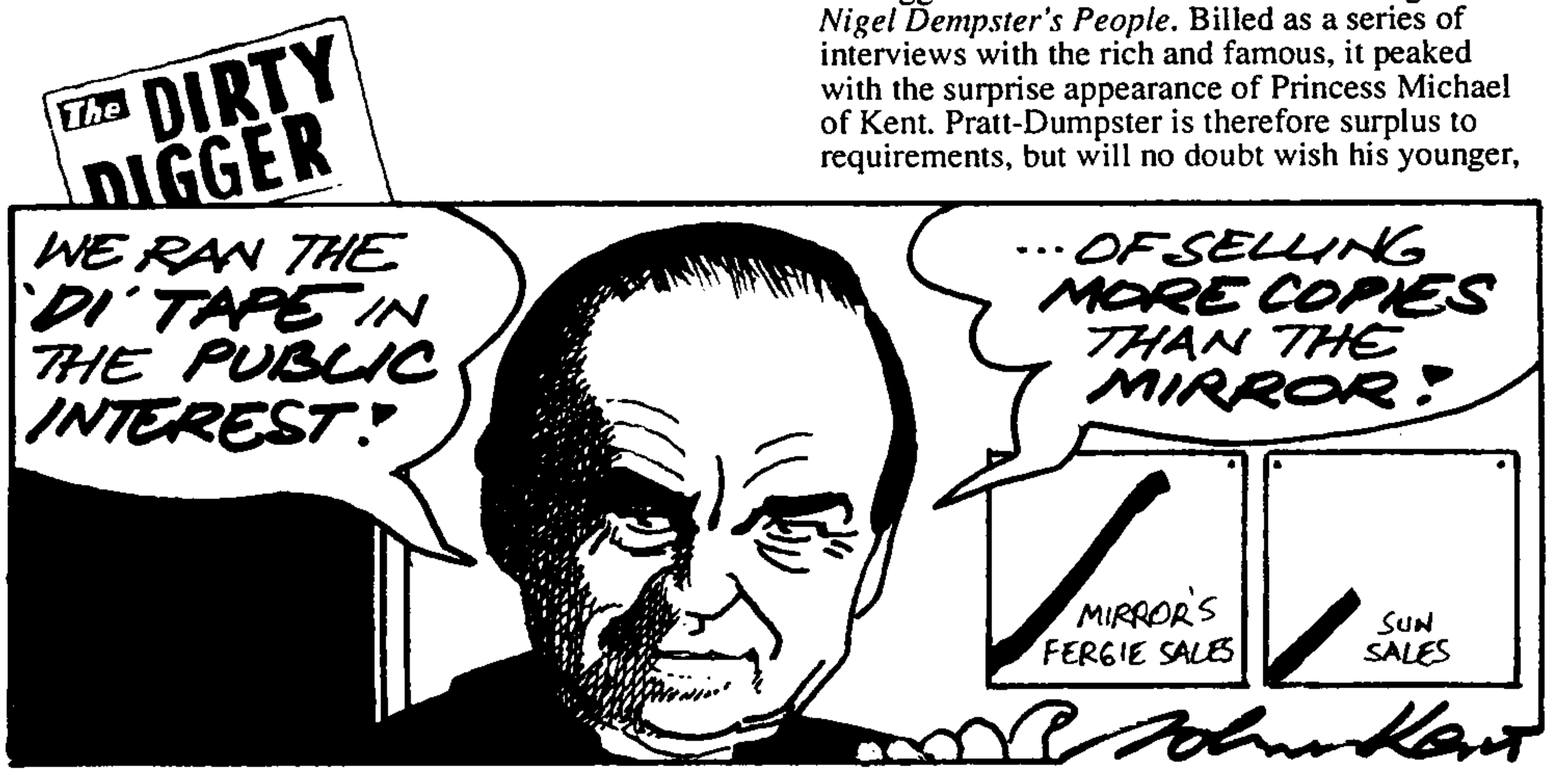
THRILLING news from the *Mail on Sunday* about *This Morning*, the ITV daytime show compered so stylishly by the now notorious Richard and Judy.

Not only will Andrew Morton be joining the programme, but "showbiz journalist Baz Bamigboye will present a weekly section... and attractive journalist Jessica Davies, a newcomer, will host a consumer affairs strand called The Right Track. Programme makers New Era will produce both."

There are, however, a couple of points missing from the otherwise comprehensive report. One is that Baz and Jessica are both *Mail* hacks and their slots are yet another attempt by Associated Newspapers to resurrect its TV production offshoot, originally started to service British Satellite Broadcasting, in which Viscount Rothermere unwisely invested.

Secondly, although the piece by Chris Hughes notes that *This Morning* should maintain "its position as the most popular daytime programme" and that Andrew Morton's arrival "marks a significant victory in the ratings war with the rival BBC daytime show", it fails to identify the casualties.

In a ratings war the weakest face oblivion, and the biggest loser in this battle is something called *Nigel Dempster's People*. Billed as a series of interviews with the rich and famous, it peaked with the surprise appearance of Princess Michael of Kent. Pratt-Dumpster is therefore surplus to requirements, but will no doubt wish his younger, more attractive *Mail* colleagues all the best as they gain their big chance.


The DIRTY DIGGER
WE RAN THE 'DI' TAPE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST!
...OF SELLING MORE COPIES THAN THE MIRROR!
MIRROR'S FERGIE SALES
SUN SALES

JUST FANCY THAT

"Lamb has transgressed every rule in the book: the terms of his county contract which forbid him from commenting in print without their permission; the terms of his contract with the TCCB which forbids comment of any nature on a Test series for two years after the event; and the terms of the ICC's code of conduct, clause 88 of which similarly forbids comment likely to be to the detriment of the game. This is certainly the case here: the only beneficiary has been Lamb's wallet, which is believed to be £10,000 thicker."

— Mike Selvey, the *Grauniad*, 27 August 1992.

"If Pakistan have broken the laws of the game, then everyone should be told, not least Lamb himself, who stuck his neck out so boldly for no better reason than the good of the game, and — let us be perfectly clear on this — certainly not for money..."

— Mike Selvey, the *Grauniad*, 29 August 1992.

A RECENT front page of the *Daily Mail* was dominated by a shock-horror non-story about "laws which allow pornographic videos to go on sale in the high street masquerading as 'sex education'".

For the rest of the week the paper worked itself into a high old state of indignation about these explicit sex videos, which "would be illegal if they were not billed as educational".

Presumably this cannot be the same *Daily Mail* that has been accepting large adverts from porn king David Sullivan promoting an "educational" video, *Lovers' Guide 2*, which "explores a far reaching range of sexual techniques and sexual methods" including "Advanced Foreplay" and "Intensifying Intercourse"?

THE APPOINTMENT of Bomber Owen as peacemaker for Yugoslavia was greeted, predictably, with wild enthusiasm by the London *Evening Standard*.

"Good, it's David Owen," shouted the leading article. "Lord Owen has not been overrated, indeed he has never been rated as his merits deserve." He has "the same quality of moral courage" as Thatcher. And so on.

The editor of the *Standard* is, of course, Stewart Gustav Steven, who hero worships the doctor. As editor of the *Mail on Sunday*, he tried to swing the paper into supporting the SDP in the 1987 general election. Lord Rothermere hit that idea on the head and related it, with a giggle, as an example of the odd sort of ideas that occurred to some editors.

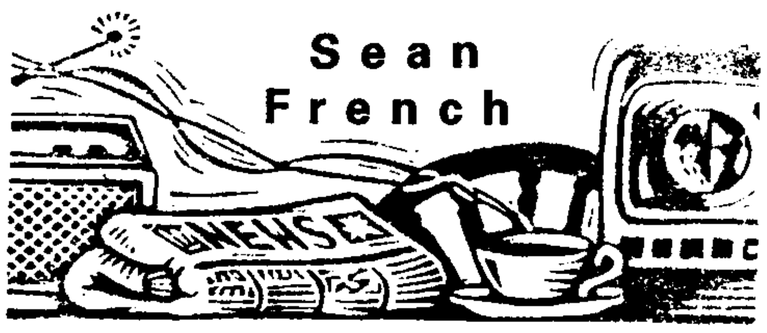
TIM "The Insider" Satchell of *Today*, the World's Worst Diarist (McLie is a "columnist", remember), has scored again.

A recent item in his "feelgood" column lavished praise on Channel 4's late-Friday-night series *A Stab In The Dark*, suggesting that its presenters — Tracey McLeod, David Baddiel, and Michael Gove — "have established themselves as the heirs to David Frost and *That Was The Week That Was*."

Where on earth has "The Insider" been over the last couple of months? Presumably inside a darkened room without a television set. Not only was the series panned by every critic, but *Broadcast* magazine even published an apology to *Stab*'s execrable predecessor, *The Word*, along the lines of "Come back, all is forgiven". Satchell gushed further: "The only obstacle to a new series is the agreement of the talented trio who have been deluged with offers of work since the show closed."

When the *Eye* asked Satchell whether he was in the habit of publishing press releases verbatim, he indignantly denied the charge. But he admitted that he had never seen *A Stab In The Dark* and had inserted the piece to fill "a hole in the page". But as the blackhole expert Professor Stephen Hawking has teased: "How can one have a hole in a hole?"

HACKWATCH No 29:



"WHY SHOULD I not publish my diary?" asks Charles Pooter on the first page of *Diary of a Nobody*, published in 1892. "I have often seen reminiscences of people I have never even heard of, and I fail to see — because I do not happen to be a 'Somebody' — why my diary should not be interesting."

A century on, Sean French has adopted the same creed. He may be a pretty obscure figure, but his father, Philip French, is the film critic of the *Observer*, which must count for something. So why should little Sean not write a weekly diary in the *New Statesman*? Surely the readers of that magazine will want to know if he has a slight cold, or has tidied his study, or is moving house? Certainly these are all subjects which he has covered at length in the *Staggers*. But there is more to it than that. Much more...

3 January: French bids farewell to 1991, the year in which he resigned his other job, as film reviewer for *Marie Claire*, to give himself more time to write a book. In his four years writing for the mag he confesses: "I received just one reader's letter... Nor did I ever actually meet anyone who had read what I wrote."

10 January: "During the post-Christmas period each year," he discloses, "I don't watch much television." Over the Christmas holidays, French stayed in Suffolk for a few days, where he looked at trees.

17 January: "I've just returned from my first ever visit to Madrid." While there, he looked at some famous paintings by Velasquez and Picasso. "Getting to know painting is like getting to know people," he observes. "Hearing about them will only get you so far."

7 February: "This weekend, I happened to be at my parents' house and I searched through a drawer in my old bedroom." There he found an old badge which he wore in the Jubilee year of 1977.

28 February: French wants to write about nature and nurture, but agrees that it is a "very boring argument". So he writes about how "recording gets in the way of experience". For example: "When using a tape recorder to conduct interviews I often find myself unable to concentrate on what is being said."

6 March: "I have read in popular science books about areas of inquiry where there are 11 dimensions, where time slows or even halts." French decides that his own existence is like that. He also reveals that he has just written an article for the *Observer*.

13 March: "I saw... last Sunday's episode of Channel 4's documentary series, *Childhood*." Nor is that all. "I once saw a programme about the making of *The Living Planet*." Oh, and he saw "Michael Palin's televised travels round the world", but was irritated by Palin's pretence that he was travelling alone when we all knew he had a TV crew with him. "Perhaps I am boringly pedantic," French admits.

27 March: "I have not watched the monarch's Christmas broadcast for many years," French suddenly reveals.

17 April: What Sean French did on election night: "We manoeuvred the TV in front of a couple of sofas. Some family and friends arrived — someone brought a bunch of red roses — and we drank sparkling wine and beer." Afterwards, French listened to the late results "while putting away bottles and doing the washing up."

24 April: In confessional mood, the columnist lets us into one or two trade secrets. "One of the few skills I possess is the ability to type with ten fingers." However, "I never read my own articles once they have appeared in print." Meanwhile, he notes a tiny misprint in an article by Christopher Ricks in the *London Review of Books*.

15 May: Our columnist has been moving in the *beau mode*: "Last week... I went to the launch for Robert Harris's book, *Fatherland*. Various politicians and celebrities were present." **29 May:** "If I wrote my columns in the manner that I talk, the result would be virtually unintelligible... On the other hand, if I talked the way I write, the result would be impossibly mannered." His inspired conclusion? "We listen and read in different ways."

12 June: French has been to a garden centre. "On this week's visit to a nursery I saw a pot of blue gentians."

26 June: "What was the price of an Underground ticket, say, from Tufnell Park to Tottenham Court Road in 1977?" The question is an excuse for another fascinating snippet of autobiography. "I made the above mentioned tube journey every evening for six months, but have no idea what the fare was."

3 July: A great adventure: French has been to "an outdoor concert in the grounds of Kenwood House, Hampstead". However, his step-children ate their crisps rather noisily and "slurped" their drinks.

17 July: A smidgen of politics. "It may be that the best thing for a socialist to do in John Major's Britain is not to make futile gestures like using state education or the National Health but to write articles about the community..." He does concede, however, that not everyone has "a regular column in the press".

24 July: "For reasons of my own, I've been reading Ernest Hemingway's advice on writing this week." He does not say what these reasons are.

14 August: Back from summer vacation. "At the end of the first week of my holiday I rang as I always do, my answering machine." Alas, "only one person had left a message".

4 September: Last week's big excitement: "I chaired, without any apparent qualification for doing so, a discussion about sex in literature at the Ways with Words literary festival at Dartington Hall in Devon." He continues trippingly: "The 200 or so people we were confronted with seemed about the sort one would expect at a literary festival. All ages, but with a slight preponderance of older people..."

O·B·N

I suspect the Queen's codeword for her role and that of her family is duty. Isn't it time that the British public dutifully told the Royal Family that we are proud and grateful that they can be held up, across the world, as the finest constitutional monarchy around?

...I have always been anti-Establishment, but I reckon the Queen and the Royal Family continue to do a brilliant job. From a mere King, long live the Queen. We appreciate you.

JONATHAN KING
Letter in Daily Mail

From the moment she chose her wedding hymn — "I vow to thee my country, all earthly things above" — the Princess (Diana) seems to have recognised this. She is not just like a vulgar starlet. She seriously believes herself to have been placed on earth to help people in this time-honoured, almost magical way.

A.N. WILSON
Evening Standard

When at last Diana's Jaguar pulled into the forecourt of the hospital and she emerged coatless into the cold December sunshine, her face alight with warmth and sincerity, she seemed like a young goddess — or the closest thing to it that the cynical last decades of the 20th century has produced.

S.J. TAYLOR
Evening Standard

Submitted by Matthew Gresham, Rosa-Maria Gane, Marina Savitskaya-Wright.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

ALAS Ann Coffey, Labour's new wild-eyed Highland-born MP for Stockport, will no longer be able to whinge in the town's council chamber.

The power-crazed councillor-MP is quitting her council seat having realised, five months after being elected to Westminster, that an MP's workload is too onerous and too London-based to allow much time for provincial politics, a fact apparent to the rest of the world for many decades.

Coffey, however, was so desperate to remain in power she cynically accepted nomination to stand for council in May, despite the imminence of her general election campaign. On becoming Stockport's MP last April, it was too late for Labour to nominate a fresh candidate for her Reddish South council ward, so a month later Coffey became the only living example of an MP standing for, and winning, a council seat.

Thanks to her megalomania Stockport council will now have to waste £2,000 of chargepayers' money printing voting cards and posters and hiring staff for a by-election. Perhaps Coffey will redistribute some of the wealth she has gained from MPs' recent salary increase and pay for the cost of electing her replacement.

HUGH BAYLEY, new Labour member for York, has evidently not read guidelines about the perks and privileges of working in the Palace of Westminster.

In mid-July he sent a circular to all members of the York constituency Labour party, addressing each member "Dear Comrade" and inviting them to attend a meeting so Bayley could "retain close contact with York Labour party members".

The letters (with computer label addresses on the envelopes) were sent out through the Palace of Westminster post office, which is in direct contravention of the rules. Local party communications, as opposed to letters to individual constituents, are not supposed to be paid for by the exchequer.

The serjeant-at-arms' office has been informed and Bayley will no doubt be reprimanded and required to pay back the costs of first-class postage to his "comrades".

WHILE the European Community frets impotently about Bosnia, Maastricht and the ERM, East Kent Euro MP Christopher Jackson has been fretting about chicken-sexing.

Jackson has been waging war against insidious entryism and commercial imperialism from Japan and South Korea over the vexed question of the EC's shortage of chicken and turkey sexing experts.

Neither the EC nor the UK's new "improved" education system trains chicken-sexers, and the community is thus at a serious commercial disadvantage. Because not enough indiginous folk can tell the difference, chicken sexers have to be recruited from the Far East.

Mr Jackson has spent much of the summer lobbying the ministry of agriculture and the European Commission for funds to set up a training scheme for sexers in his constituency. At last a Euro MP who is doing something useful...

'Backbiter'

Grovel

I HEAR that the repellent Harold Soref, former Conservative MP for Ormskirk and founder member of the Monday Club, is developing some nasty habits in his old age.

The 75-year-old brute has taken to hiring temporary staff from agencies, ostensibly to clean and shop for him at his Chelsea home.

One unfortunate woman arrived at the "untidy, musty-smelling flat" to be greeted by Soref, who was dressed in stained, gaping-open pyjamas, and was asked to shave him. She, not unnaturally, refused, explaining that she was there to tidy and shop for him — whereupon Soref began making unpleasant gynaecological comments, quite unprintable in a family publication.

At this point the woman left. The agency, which was unaware of Soref's nasty little ways, will *not* be sending round any more temps...

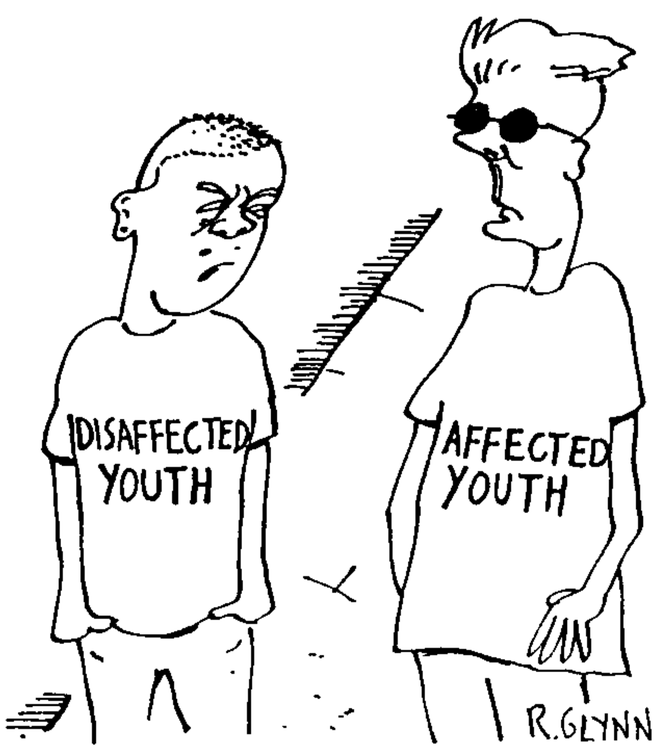
I AM told that Julie Burchill is proving an excellent moral tutor to her six-year-old son, Jack.

She recently gave him £1,000 to invest. When Jack's paternal grandfather, Jay Landesman, joshingly suggested he might like to invest some of the money in a new Broadway musical, *The Great Gatsby*, to be produced by Simon Callow and with lyrics by Jack's grandmother, Fran, the tyke was dismissive. "Fuck off, asshole!" he exclaimed.

Meanwhile, Jay had hoped to use a quotation from his daughter-in-law for the dustjacket of the second volume of his memoirs, due from Orion shortly. However, La Burchill has refused to let him use the quote on the grounds that Landesman has included references to her in the book without her permission.

IN THE wake of the Mellor tapes, I have been sent the transcript of a 1986 tape-recorded conversation between barrister Stuart Stevens, head of chambers at 3 Kings Bench Walk, and his child's nanny, one Kerry. Much of the conversation is taken up with Daddy and Nanny "playing together", but some of it is very bizzare indeed.

Stuart tells Kerry that women used to go mad over his sexy, small, tight bum, and then discusses his organ. "The trouble is I'm rather large anyway for my size so the trousers were not made with that much space. I suppose if you're a 6ft 6ins bloke there would have [*sic*] enough space. A dwarf might have a 12ft one or a 12ins one... Yep, take a long time to come. Chook, chook, chook, chook... Never come out at the end. It would clog half way down."



Pseuds Corner

At certain times of the month I can usually feel premenstrual symptoms — I swell with water, I get spots, headaches, I become temperamental. But we have a way of working that responds to the menstrual cycle. If it is ovulation time, there's a particular energy in the house to which we can both respond, if we prepare for it...

...The Poet's Perfect Day is similar except that we make love during the daytime, perhaps

after lunch. When we rise, the world seems composed of poetic symbols and images. If we're lucky, we catch it in our writings. I've written several poems about jars of marmalade, where they become extraordinary things.

PETER REDGROVE
Independent on Sunday

The woman's role is that of Our Blessed Lady: to show by her shining example what true Christian love truly is.

Just over two years ago, and rather late in life, I got married. My lovely wife, Juliet, is the very model of modern Catholic lady: devoted to the Church, devoted to her undeserving but massively grateful husband, devoted to her relatives and his, always ready to stop and rescue a bird with a broken wing, and instantly loved by all who meet her...

...Archbishop Luigi Barbarito, the Papal Nuncio, came to dinner a few months after he had married us.

He looked round our tiny house in Richmond and said that even the decor and the arrangement of the furniture showed how much love there was in the household.

CHRISTOPHER MONCKTON
Catholic Herald

For what difference can there possibly be between a penis filmed by Vincente Aranda and one filmed by Wenders, say? Or Greenaway? Or Fellini? The director's style and sensibility, his compositions and camera angles, the whole set of techniques and practices that he deploys to sustain our interest in the imaginative world he has conjured up, abruptly forfeit their power of mediation between us and the screen — and all we see, all we cannot help staring at, is a penis.

GILBERT ADAIR
Independent

Lady Antonia Fraser gave one of her rare unguarded hoots of laughter when I asked over lunch why she had her initials printed on her car. The far-away look and Mona Lisa smile disappeared for an instant as she explained that "like most things in my life it's highly practical". Being "car blind", she explained, she had the initials put on because she found "men were not all that charmed when I tried to break into their car by mistake".

CASSANDRA JARDINE
Daily Telegraph

Emma and David, the Marchioness and Marquis of Granby, didn't feel able to do without a list. "We nearly didn't get married because of it, but it is a good idea for people who don't know you," said Emma, now safely ensconced in her new home of Belvoir Castle. "That's if they bother to use it," said David. "You go to all this trouble to get a list together and then they go and buy you something off the list. We got lots of bowls and five travelling rugs." Emma's favourite is a pearl-handled Stilton scoop from Asprey's, which cost £226.

You magazine

CONTRIBUTORS: Pamela Howe, E. Strobes, Anon, E.D.J. Hay, Miss R.C. Perrin.

£10 paid for entries

MY friend Kelvin Mackenzie, the distinguished editor of the *Sun*, has returned from his summer holiday in a foul mood.

For months Kelvin has been making preparations for the forthcoming nuptials of his daughter Kiershan to a pony-tailed young lad called Jason. A vast wedding cake was commissioned, and a top "rave" band hired from the United States. Kelvin had even rented a "bouncy castle" on which guests could disport themselves.

He had also given young Kiershan a dowry, in the form of a job on the *Sun*'s Bizarre column, and had promoted Jason from his previous lowly position as a messenger to a post in the paper's production department.

But now, with the happy union only weeks away, the groom has got cold feet and called the whole thing off, leaving Kelvin with bills of at least £10,000 in cancellation fees. Jason's chances of promotion at the *Sun* are, I suspect, none too good.

UNSAVOURY information reaches me concerning the roly-poly *GQ* editor Michael VerMeulen, who after many weeks of trying to interest the media in his cause is delighted to be the subject of a forthcoming "in-depth" profile in the *Guardian*.

The profile may well put *Guardian* editors in some difficulty if it is to penetrate the inner life of this controversial figure. For although the new-look *Grauniad* is very permissive when it comes to sex, the VerMeulen dossier is so shocking it could offend even the likes of *Guardian* arts editor, Ms Jocelyn Targett.

The American-born VerMeulen has long been unnaturally interested in sex aids, I gather. Friends remember him when on holiday once trying to interest girls in "vaginal balls" (*What they? Ed*). Then there was the occasion when he invited back to his flat a buxom hackette on the *Daily Mail*. Rifling through the great man's drawers the lady was excited to find a large collection of vibrators. "Leave them alone," snapped VerMeulen. "They're for me!" This extraordinary remark could explain a cryptic comment of VerMeulen's which has puzzled his friends: "I like to have every orifice filled."

The *Guardian* should know that VerMeulen's passion for sex aids and dildos is so great that he likes to carry them through the security screen at airports. Apparently he gets a kick from seeing them show up on the x-ray machine, especially if they excite or embarrass the female "members" of the security team.

(To be continued)

Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

THERE is a tale of the modern Church of England, a typical tale of tolerance, broadmindedness, selflessness, social responsibility and community-minded respect for both living and dead beyond the confines of narrow parochial interests.

It concerns the parish of Wythall, a semi-rural area in Worcestershire, just south of Birmingham. The parish church is, for the moment, a mid-Victorian building of 1862 in banded red brick designed by Frederick Preedy, surmounted by a splendid central tower of 1908 designed by the inspired Edwardian Birmingham architect W.H. Bidlake.

As for Preedy, who was both an architect and designer of stained glass, he may not be in the top rank of Victorian architects but he was sufficiently interesting to be subject of a monograph (1984) by the late Gordon Barnes, ecclesiologist and photographer. But never mind about boring art-historical facts, what matters is that people in Wythall like their church and want to worship in it.

Or some of them do. The vicar, the Rev Peter Thompson, certainly does not; and nor do the usual divisive faction of hand-clapping evangelists who have taken over control of the parish church council. They want to build a nice new church suitable for cosy community worship and coffee drinking. The trouble is that Preedy's building needs repair. Five years ago, when it was closed, the estimate for restoration was £40,000 — not a large sum by contemporary standards. But the vicar will not spend a penny on the building and nor will the diocese (Brum) — despite the fact that Miss Emily Mynors, who paid for Bidlake's tower, left almost her entire estate to the church: worth today more than £1 million. [Moral: never leave money to the Church of England unless tied up with stringent legal covenants, otherwise the diocese will get its hands on it and it will probably go to the World Council of Churches to support guerrilla movements.]

So, for the moment, "traditional" services are held in the church hall while nice family services take place in the local school and, naturally, the church commissioners want to declare St Mary's redundant — for only then will planning permission be granted to erect a new building in what is green belt land.

This is not popular. The commissioners' draft redundancy scheme elicited 51 letters in favour and 1,681 in opposition. But the church is seldom responsive to local opinion when it is in conflict with perceived pastoral priorities, so the commissioners are pressing ahead and the opposition has been advised that, if the matter is taken to the privy council and they lose, they will be clobbered with massive legal costs — the Church of England's way of dealing with impudent interference, as the Victorian Society well knows.

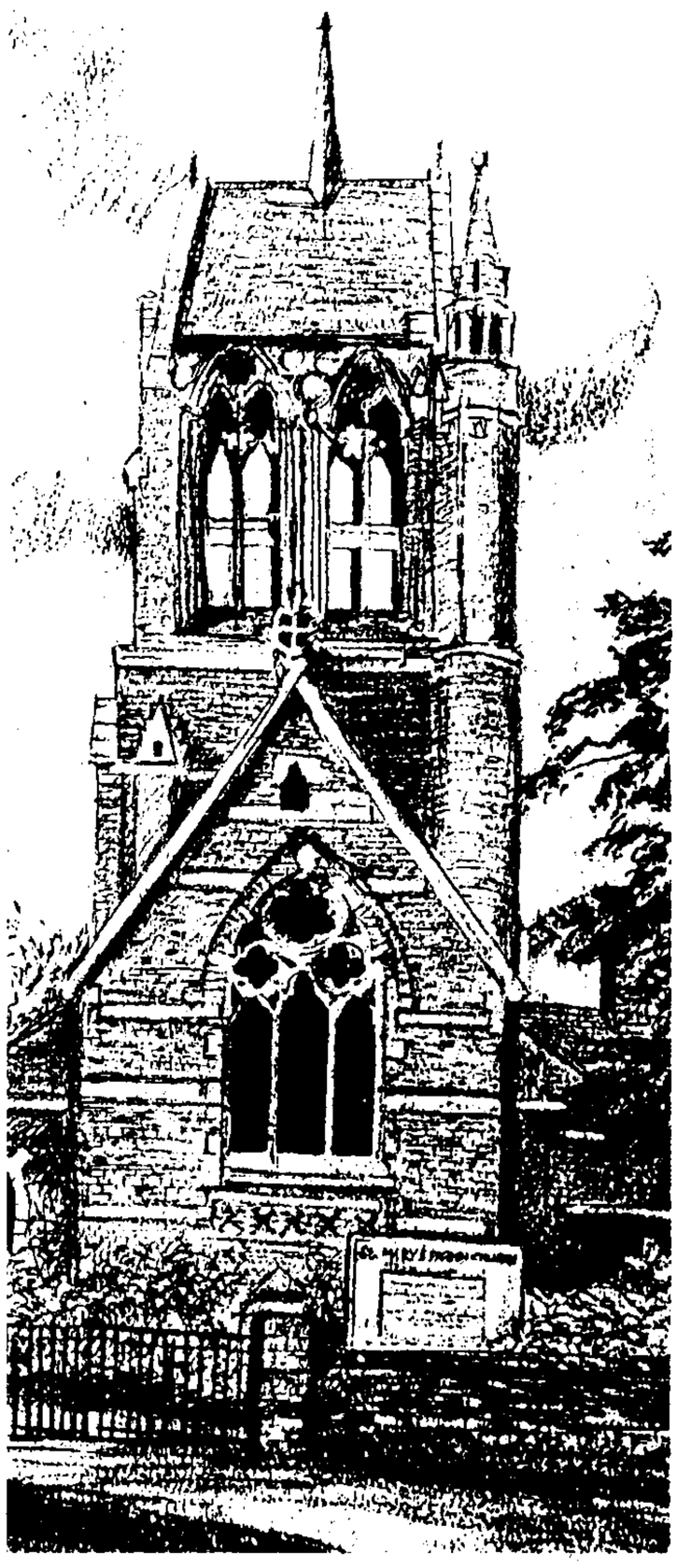
Not, it should be said, that poor Preedy's church will be pulled down. Rather, it will be sold to make money. Gothic Revival churches are almost always totally unsuitable for conversion to other uses without destructive alteration, but the commissioners' favoured scheme is to sell the building to something called Ashdale Investments Ltd for "office and ancillary purposes".

This will both wreck the interior and spoil the exterior, for it was first proposed to level 250 graves in the churchyard to make a large car park (at the last count, Ashdale Investments employed four people). This provoked such local disgust that the northern part of the churchyard has been reprieved. Even so, to create room for 24 cars, it is still necessary to wipe out 85 graves — including that of munificent Miss Emily Mynors. There's gratitude for you!

A civilisation can be judged by the respect it shows to the dead. Ours shows little. Barbarians instinctively destroy intimidating relics of higher civilisations, or give vent to their hatred on the dead rather than the living as the dead cannot resist. Vandals smash and push over headstones; neo-Nazis desecrate the graves of Jews. Is to tarmac over graves and, as a reluctant concession to sensibilities, to stack headstones around the churchyard wall (better than laying them down as paths, I suppose) really any different?

Such are the priorities of our forward-looking, financially incompetent, greedy, caring new Church of England.

'Piloti'



TUC NEWS

IF A DISABLED man with four children were wrongly kept out of his rightful job, he might think it worth calling in his trade union. But in the case of Willie Whalen of Carlisle, the guilty employer is his trade union.

Astonishing allegations of ballot-rigging and bogus disciplinary charges in the building workers' union UCATT — many of them published over the years in the *Eye* — have at last been investigated by John Hands QC. His report upholds many of the complaints and condemns the union executive for "deliberate and unacceptable tactics", "denial of rights" etc etc.

In the case of the 1988 election of officers in the north-west in which Mr Whalen clams the vote was rigged against him, Mr Hands found *prima facie* evidence of electoral impropriety at Barrow 016 branch and Whitehaven 298 branch.

Documents, he suggests, were destroyed by the union leadership which Whalen was challenging. Will Whalen be reinstated or even compensated? Watch this space, but be realistic.

QUIETLY and without fuss another employer has removed around £6,500 from a former employee's pension fund.

The "victim" in this case is Roger Windsor, ex-chief executive and whistleblower of the National Union of Mineworkers. Because he refuses to stump up legal costs following failed litigation in southern Ireland against his former boss Arthur Scargill, the NUM's lawyers have enforced an "employer's lien" to squeeze the cash out of Windsor.

This is the same method Mirror Group Newspapers is using to extract cash from Betty Maxwell, widow of the late pension-stealer Cap'n Rob. And it means that Windsor, 45, will get his NUM pension docked by that amount when he applies for it.

Peter Ernest Heathfield, newly-retired NUM general secretary, has no such financial worries, however, despite suffering acute hardship during the 1984/85 coal strike. He has retired with a £130,000 "golden handshake" consisting of severance pay from the NUM and a lump sum from the staff pension scheme. In addition, Heathfield will get a two-thirds annual pension, worth around £600 a week based on his £50,000 final salary.

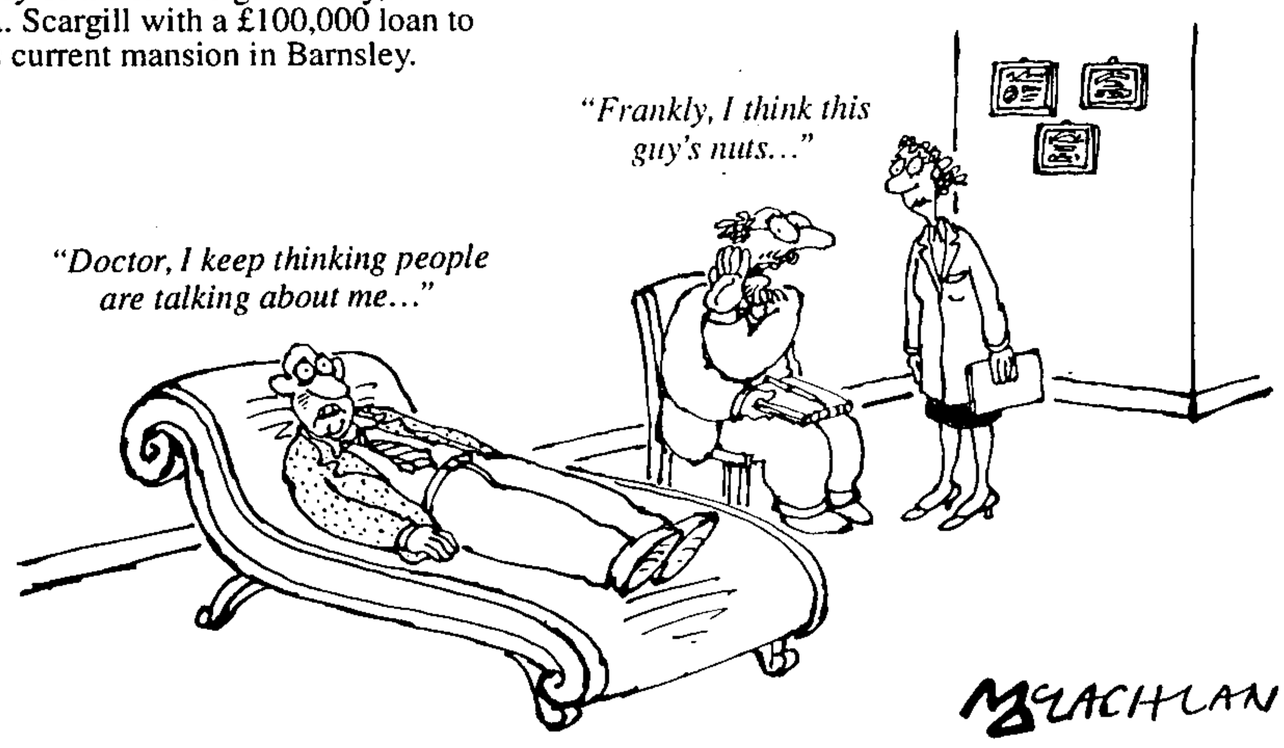
Heathfield thus becomes the first beneficiary of the NUM's improved redundancy terms for staff. NUM officials (surprise, surprise) are covered by the new deal, which is worth three weeks' pay for every year of service.

Perhaps Heathfield will now be able to repay his £60,000 loan from the Paris-based International Miners' Organisation (President: A. Scargill). Heathfield was given this generous loan, at the ripe old age of 60 in 1989, to help him buy a new house after his marriage break-up. He was the second beneficiary of the IMO's generosity, the first being one A. Scargill with a £100,000 loan to help him buy his current mansion in Barnsley.

THE NUM has also expelled the executive member who helped barrister Gavin Lightman with his probe into Arthur Scargill's financial genius. The expelled man is Kevin Barron, Labour MP for Rother Valley and a former Scargill campaign manager.

The expulsion is particularly bizarre because the NUM commissioned Lightman to carry out the report in the first place. His report was not to Scargill's liking and Barron was given the boot for leaking NUM secrets to the QC.

When Lightman published his report he was sued for breach of copyright by the NUM. Lightman has since apologised out of court for this "error of judgement". He said in his report that the loans to Scargill and Heathfield "disturbed me considerably". Clearly the loans will never disturb the National Union of Mineworkers.



EYE TV

Covington Cross

(ITV)

AMERICANS love British TV drama series, but only so long as they don't have to watch them.

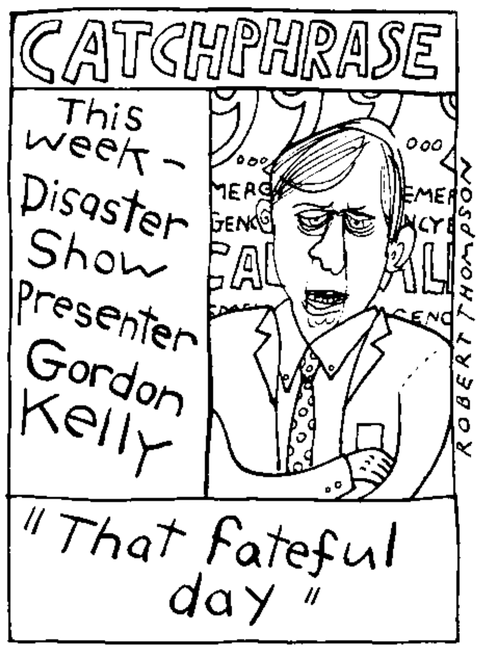
Upstairs Downstairs may be the best loved British export after the Princess of Wales, but the last show that was actually networked in the US was *The Avengers*, back in 1966. It's those strange accents, you see. What are those people saying, honey? And where is England anyway? I just love that Princess Di.

All of which makes Thames's recent success with **Covington Cross** all the more astonishing. The first British drama series to be sold to network American TV in 25 years, **Covington Cross** is a riproaring medieval knock-about, full of brave knights, fair ladies and white chargers.

Filmed in Britain with a predominantly British cast, it's a success that any company would envy. And yet Thames, an organisation not usually noted for its bashfulness, has remained oddly modest about the whole business. Flags and bunting have been conspicuous by their absence. Instead the 90-minute pilot episode, a bumper helping that precedes the full eight million-part series, was dropped almost apologetically into the bank holiday schedules, in an early evening slot where no one but the very curious would find it. Watching it, you could see why.

As you'd imagine, this is Merrie England with a distinctly Hollywood twist. No one actually says "forsooth" or "lawks-a-mercy", but it's not, you feel, for want of trying. Nigel Terry plays Sir Thomas Gray, Lord of Covington Cross and the series' hero. Booming theatrically for all he's worth, Terry has clearly watched Patrick Stewart do his RSC number as Captain Picard in the new *Star Trek* series and now fancies a piece of the action. This is rich, fruity acting, of a shamelessness that suggests that Terry never expected to see it on British television.

Sir Thomas' four children are all clean-cut young heartthrobs in their late teens and early twenties, whose identical upbringing has nonetheless given them a rich



variety of accents, ranging from slightly nasal home counties to full-blooded Californian. All have perfect complexions and freshly washed hair. The castle is warm and homely, and every room has a blazing log fire and flaming torches on the walls. Even the roast chicken at dinner gleams with medieval goodness.

Nonetheless life in 14th century England is rough and tough, even if everyone does shower regularly. Sir Thomas's nextdoor neighbour is John Mullens, played by James Faulkner, whose swivelling eyes and evil beard instantly mark him out as chief villain. Invited to the court of King Edward for dinner and a quiet chat, Sir Thomas is swiftly finessed by Mullens into marrying his daughter to Mullens's son, whose demonic sideburns mark him out as even more evil.

Eleanor isn't too keen on this, as she is in love with a young portrait painter with a Bee Gee beard. "The world can be anything we make it," she tells her father, pouting winsomely. Meanwhile, back at the castle, the arrival has been announced of a French businessman, who turns out to be a luscious young French businesswoman with an enormous cleavage. Sir Thomas' three sons show something of an interest in this embonpoint, and ho-ho orchestral music accompanies all their scenes together. By this time the wedding is drawing near, and so Eleanor runs away, leaving a note that says, "I shall leave Covington Cross tonight, never to return." Fortunately the Bee Gee lives nearby, and his tiny shack is forever dappled in autumn sunlight.

And so it carries on, enlivened occasionally by some rudimentary swordplay and more frequently by quite agonising anachronisms. To hear a 14th century knight speaking of "setting my own agenda", or Cherie Lunghi telling someone to "take a walk" — these are the real pleasures of *Covington Cross*.

Of course many Americans think we all still live in castles, in between going to Oxford and cuddling teddy bears, so it's distinctly possible that this series has been billed there as a gritty view of life in contemporary Britain. What is certain is that Thames has been wise to keep quiet about it: common denominators rarely come much lower.

'Couch Potato'

MEDIA NEWS

WHO IS the most powerful man in television? Apparently it is Sebastian Cody, the producer responsible for Channel 4's late, unlamented *After Dark*, a programme so static and dull it looked exactly the same when fast-forwarded on video.

BBC2's *TV Hell* intended to celebrate the show's nadir — the night when a hoax caller penetrated *After Dark*'s abysmal security by impersonating Michael Grade and took the programme off air: a grotesque lapse that led to the show being axed shortly afterwards.

Michael Jackson, head of BBC music and arts, approved a silhouetted interview with the hoaxer and Liz Forgan, deputy head of Channel Four, sportingly recorded her painful recollections of the debacle. But they reckoned without the most powerful man in TV, whose Open Media company owns rights to *After Dark* and sent off a flurry of portentous faxes to the BBC which prevented the item being transmitted.

Strange behaviour from Cody and a company calling itself *Open Media*, especially since this was the first time in months that any TV station had expressed the least interest in broadcasting one of its programmes. Since the axing of *After Dark*, Cody's production company has "gone dark" itself. The woman who answers the phone at *Closed Media* says: "Er... we don't actually have *anything* on air at present. But we are developing a lot of programmes. Sebastian's *so* clever. He's related to Buffalo Bill, you know..."

AN INGENIOUS scheme to cut costs at the BBC, instigated by John Birt, the corporation's director general-designate, has backfired gloriously despite the huge management expertise that must have gone into planning it.

Television Centre and Kensington House in west London were wired up with a new computer system designed to monitor budgets under the "producer choice strategy" — the internal market in BBC services that Birt has introduced.

But when BBC secretaries and personal assistants were trained to use the new system, they found it impossibly baffling with the result that the entire computer system will now have to be scrapped. Cost to the licence-payer: £4 million.

JUST FANCY THAT

"Jocelyn Pride was a whizz-kid of forty who had developed the Eldorado drama policy, a cunning construct by which plodding and deeply conventional scripts hurriedly written by half-experienced authors were cheaply shot...

" 'If we had a really bankable star we could get world-wide co-production money,' said Lord Mellow. 'And prime time on the major American networks.'

" 'This hardly sounds like Eldorado,' said Sir Luke."

—from Malcolm Bradbury's novella CUTS *(Hutchinson, 1987)*

CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
"WHAT'S UP GRADE & ATTENBOROUGH?"
AXE
Radio 2
Radio 5
"WE'RE SAYING THE GOVERNMENT WILL CASTRATE THE BBC!"
"THEY CAN'T DO THAT..."
WE LOST OUR BALLS YEARS AGO!"
"Trebles & choppers all round!"
REAL LIVES '85
SECRET SOCIETY '87
MY COUNTRY RIGHT OR WRONG '88
PANORAMA MARCH '92
"Did I hear someone mention Sado Masochism?"
Ken Pyne

AFTER Martin Bell was injured by shrapnel in Sarajevo, the BBC's head of news and current affairs, Tony "Head Prefect" Hall, issued a drooling appreciation of his brave correspondent. Bell's injury, he implied, proved the Beeb's commitment to fearless news reporting.

This was too much for one BBC hack, who composed a furious anonymous memo which was circulating in the newsroom last week. It runs thus:

"FACT. Hall winkled Bell out of his Washington post... in order to implant boring, multi-toothed Esler, to be followed by Hall's pock-marked, I-speak-your-weight university crony Martin Sixsmith.

"FACT. While he was reporting the fall of East Germany, Bell had to suffer a personal visit from the ludicrous boy-wonder Hall, who informed him that his reporting style was not compatible with his vision of a new, 'analytical' style of journalism. Bell told him, in traditional Bell understated English, to fuck off.

"*Hall and* the desk-bound theorists who surround him are now jumping on the bandwagon, basking in the reflected glory of a seasoned hack who copped a mortar shell in pursuit of 'analytical' journalism. Fuck them. Fuck them all."

Clearly, as John Birt and Duke Hussey so rightly point out, morale at the BBC has never been higher.

I'm not ready to quit yet, says BBC boss
BBC boss Sir Michael Checkland yesterday denied that he would be quitting at the end of the year.
Daily Mail

TWO WEEKS ago, after Michael Grade's attack on the BBC, the corporation's chairman, Duke Hussey, refused all invitations to comment. Except one: he gave an exclusive interview to the Dirty Digger's *Sunday Times*.

John Birt, too, kept his head down after Grade's onslaught. But last weekend he broke cover from his holiday hideaway in Santa Fe, New Mexico, to give an exclusive interview to... the *Sunday Times*.

These are not the only favours the corporation's disastrous duo have done for Murdoch recently. Indeed, it could be said that they are responsible for saving his bacon. Without the BBC's support, BSkyB's bid for the rights to Premier League football would probably have failed, since the league wanted at least some coverage on a terrestrial channel. Thanks to the football deal, Sky is now anticipating a huge boom in sales of dishes and subscriptions to its Sports channel — just in time to bale out the Digger's debt-laden empire.

Oh, and when Birt recently signed up his old mate David Frost to host a BBC series, the deal included an unprecedented clause permitting Sky to show the programmes as well.

Birt's devotion to Rupert has been evident for some time. Two years ago, after listening to a vehemently anti-BBC speech by Murdoch at the Edinburgh Television Festival, Birt leapt to his feet and congratulated the Digger not only on his speech but also on the general brilliance of Sky Television.

Why are Hussey and Birt so keen to ingratiate themselves with the Digger, who has devoted so much of his energy in recent years to undermining the BBC?

In Hussey's case, he may be simply repaying a debt: from 1982 to 1986, until winning the BBC chairmanship, Hussey was paid a handsome salary by Murdoch as a director of Times Newspapers, in spite of his proven incompetence as a newspaper executive.

What of Birt? His motives remain a mystery. However, there is one scenario that occurs to some TV executives. In three years' time, armed with the knighthood which he craves so much, Birt leaves the BBC and takes up a post as Rupert Murdoch's right-hand man, replacing the present incumbent, Andrew Knight.

Pure fantasy? Perhaps. But watch this space.

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

SHEFFIELD

AFTER losing more than £20 million staging last year's World Student Games, Sheffield city council is now forcing through a £13 million cuts package in a desperate attempt to make the books balance.

The belt-tightening will curtail many grants to outside bodies. But one lucky recipient which has just been promised a £60,000 handout is Sheffield Co-op Development Group (SCDG), a body which uses the council to underwrite six-figure loans made to local co-ops and their tiny, equal opportunities work forces.

By an astonishing coincidence the city's new council leader, Mike Bower, works for Sheffield CDG as an organiser. Last year town hall legal officers questioned his legitimacy to remain a councillor while being employed by an organisation funded almost entirely from town hall coffers and he was even deselected by his Labour party ward.

Yet just before the elections he announced his suitability as a candidate and desperately sought a fresh seat. When none of Sheffield's ungrateful constituencies made themselves available, Sheffield Labour party was obliged to foist him on to the hapless Netherthorpe ward. The fact that incumbent council leader Clive Betts had just been selected for a safe parliamentary seat and would be retiring from the council had nothing to do with it.

MANCHESTER

THE recent conviction in Belgium of businessman Jean-Claude Decaux for bribing municipal officials may cause hearts to beat a little faster in a number of English town halls.

Decaux, owner of the billboard company Street Equipment Ltd, was found guilty of offering public officials in the Belgian city of Liege money and holidays in exchange for contracts. Decaux was given a one-year suspended sentence and fined £1,000. In the same case a former Belgian minister, Edouard Close, was convicted of accepting one million Belgian francs (about £17,000) from one of Decaux's subsidiary firms.

In Britain, Street Equipment has contracts with both Birmingham and Manchester city councils — local authorities renowned for carelessness when dishing out public funds. Street Equipment owns 300 roadside signs and advertising columns in Brum and has a 20-year contract with the council, signed by Decaux, to provide advertising boards.

When Birmingham and Decaux signed the contract the council claimed the boards would not cost the charge payers a penny. In fact Birmingham had to pay £180,000 for installation work and lighting.

Mystery also surrounds the way Street Equipment won a £6.8 million contract with Manchester, late in 1990, to provide tourist information signs. Although the company was not among the original four firms tendering and failed to submit a tender by the September 1990 deadline, as documents sent to the *Eye* at the time showed, Street Equipment still won the contract. Another strange municipal coincidence, of course.

MURKEYSIDE

SOME of the £56,000 of public money spent by politically "correct" Liverpool city council and the Murkeyside development corporation to fund anti-Columbus events is now being used to import an anti-semitic demagogue from the United States.

Speaking at what was billed as a "compulsory [sic] two day lecture" at Liverpool university in the middle of last week was Professor Leonard Jeffries of City College, New York. This American "academic" sees the main movers behind Columbus and the slave trade as "the Jews". He claims there is a Jewish "conspiracy" to destroy blacks which has been "planned, plotted and programmed out of Hollywood" in alliance with the mafia.

Joining Jeffries the previous Sunday at the politically incorrect venue of the "Empire" theatre was Sister Soulijah from the US rap group Public Enemy and the Bantu band, both of whom have shown a fondness for the anti-semitic rantings of Louis Farrakhan (himself banned from Britain for his views).

News of these arrivals has caused uproar in the local Jewish community. When Liverpool councillor Neville Chinn complained about public funding of the events, he received a phone call somewhat lacking in the spirit of liberal debate. "You are typical Jewish scum who do not deserve to be on this earth. If Jeffries or Sister Soulijah do not perform, neither will you, but permanently — you are dead."

Just what the members of the "Democratic Left" which runs the 5,000 Years of Resistance campaign are doing organising such dangerous poison is anybody's guess. Yet with years of practice at ignoring anti-semitism behind the iron curtain when the anti-semites traded as the Communist Party, they are probably used to it.

Liverpool, for all its empty right-on posturing, would seem to have forgotten that 1492 was also the year the Jews were expelled from Spain.

BENT

BARMY Bent's 18-month Tory-African nationalist ruling coalition is set to crumble thanks to the long-overdue sacking of independent councillor Poline Nyaga as chair of environmental services. It follows her astonishing racist outburst against local Asians.

Nyaga, followers of the barmy Bent scene will recall, switched from Labour to Conservative last year along with fellow loony Nkechi Amalu-Johnson, because Bent's ruling Labour leaders were not doing enough to further the cause of the borough's black Africans.

The defections gave the Tories power by a slender margin, but even they could not stomach Nyaga's latest antics — a series of motions demanding that none of the £3 million of town hall grants for black groups should go to Brent's Asians. Nyaga wants Brent to redistribute funds for local Asian groups among Africans, replace all Asians in council posts with Africans and to close down Willesden's Pakistani centre.

Although Bent's power-made ruling Tories sacked Nyaga as environment chair, they initially refused to withdraw the whip and voted against opposition moves condemning her motions in what was a confused attempt to hold on to her vote and the equally unpredictable support of her Idi Amin-loving sidekick, Amalu-Johnson. However, doorstep complaints during by-election canvassing in Alperton, a ward in which many Asians live, finally caused the Tories to change their minds and withdraw the whip.

Nyaga, despite her own racist taunting of Brent's Asians, lost no time in pulling the race card and claimed that the Tories had sacked her from environment "because I'm black". She also tried to excuse her outburst by owning up to a hitherto unknown penchant for the Hindu faith. The fact that 85 per cent of Brent's insulted Asians are also Hindu is a coincidence.

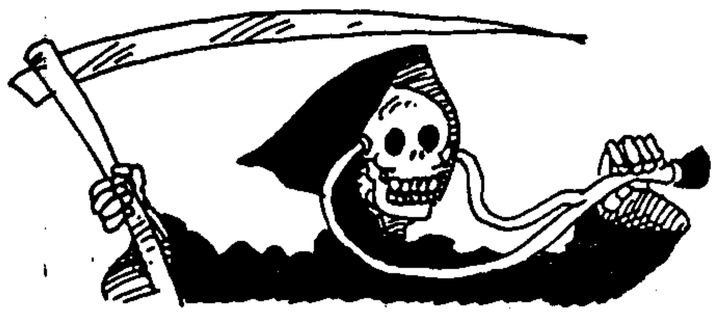
BROMLEY

FRESH from interviews with Inspector Knacker of the Met over strange occurrences within Bromley social services, Mike Carpenter (*Eyes passim*), the department's former director, has popped up on the Isle of Wight as consultant to the council's Community Care Task Group.

Carpenter left suburban south London under a cloud having been suspended from his post after meeting Knacker to discuss a number of documents found in Bromley town hall and a trip Carpenter took to the US, partly paid for by a private company hoping to set up a deal with Bromley council.

Isle of Wight chargepayers might like to know that during his tenure at Bromley, £400,000 was lost in a botched attempt to privatise old people's and children's homes; Carpenter was accused by the welfare group NAYPIC of revealing confidential information about council charges to members of the public; and children in his care demonstrated in the streets against their new private sector managers.

Since Carpenter left Bromley, however, chaos has continued in social services. In June assistant director Geoff Smith was sacked for gross misconduct and is now on bail while helping Knacker with his inquiries.



DOING THE ROUNDS

THE managers of Wales's first NHS trust, Withybush General Hospital in Pembrokeshire (motto: Leading the Way in Wales) are celebrating in style: chief executive Brian Davis has rewarded himself with a spanking-new red Porsche; hospital manager Paul M. Barnett has been granted an Audi; the director of resources a Mercedes. The trust chairman is making do with a large BMW, while junior managers have to struggle along with smaller BMWs and the odd Golf GTI.

One of the four disabled parking spaces near the front of the hospital has been seconded for senior management use only. Money for the management car pool will be retrieved in part by the refusal of Keith Brown, personnel director, to grant sick pay to any member of staff absent on account of sports injuries or any other illness deemed to be "self-inflicted".

● AT THE **Royal Gwent Hospital** in Newport the country's busiest casualty department, which treats more than 65,000 patients a year, has been left without a consultant after the present incumbent collapsed in early August. Acting general manager Mrs Hazel Taylor is hoping to get a replacement some time later this month.

● AT **Edinburgh's City Hospital**, the doctors' mess is in such a foul state the environmental health officer has been called in. Samples were taken from a variety of surfaces and were found to contain types of mould never previously cultivated in Edinburgh. Management is trying (as yet unsuccessfully) to make junior doctors pay for refurbishment.

● AT **London's St Bartholomew's College of Nursing and Midwifery**, 31 student nurses face suspension for publicising 29 examples of defective care at two college-run nursing homes, Louis Freedman and Brownswood. The college vice-principal, Sonya Crow, views their complaints as "extreme insolence" and has promised to visit discipline upon any student who fails to provide a written retraction. So much for health secretary Virginia Bottomley's legitimisation of whistleblowing.

● DR K.A.M. GRANT, chief executive of the **Barts NHS Trust** in **London** (erroneously referred to as "Mr" in *Eyes passim*) began his opening address to employees in the first issue of *Barts News* with: "Finance really has to be at the top of our agenda and is likely to remain there for some while." Whatever happened to equal healthcare for all?

Dr Grant, whose hospital is £5.7 million "outside the agreed financial target", has cut surgical beds at **Barts, Homerton** and **St Marks**. He has also imposed a freeze on all vacancies other than those approved by the executive.

● COULD the sudden and unexpected resignation of the **South West regional health authority** chairman Charles Stuart have anything to do with Catherine "Hatchet" Hawkins (*Eyes passim*) and her laser style of management?

Sir Charles's parting remark was: "I'd sooner forgo my knighthood than work with that woman any longer." Miss Hawkins's previous exploits include sacking an NHS general manager over tea in the culinarily-challenged environs of the Happy Eater on the A38 in Devon.

● **LONDON'S Westminster Hospital** is facing more than its fair share of ward closures. Over the last two years, surgical beds have dropped from 98 to 28, with Rock Carling ward the most recent to face the axe. The ward is well known for the kindness and commitment of its nursing staff, seven of whom have been promised work "elsewhere" while five have heard nothing. The dermatology ward (George Watts) has also been singled out for prompt closure.

● AT NEARBY **Charing Cross hospital**, also under the control of **Riverside health authority**, staff on the diabetic ward (9 North) were given only one week's notice of closure. The new **Chelsea and Westminster hospital**, due to open next spring and take over the care of patients from Westminster and Charing Cross, is already a hundred beds under the number promised at the planning stage.

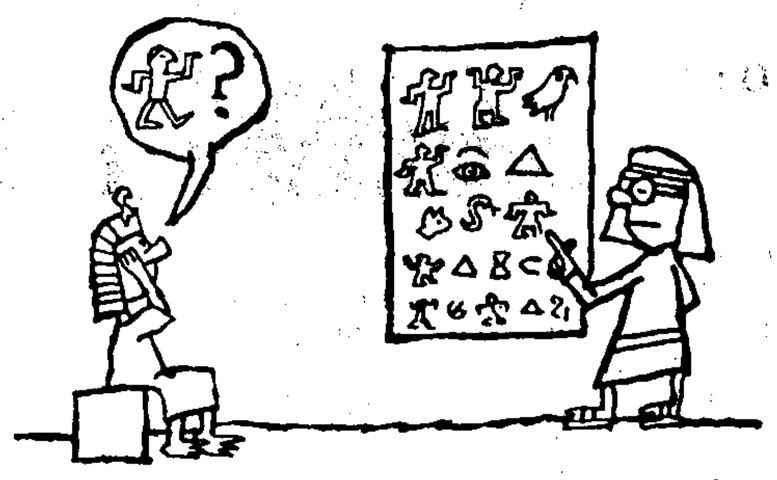
● IN **READING**, the **Royal Berkshire** and **Battle hospitals** are steaming ahead with their trust applications with a minimum of public fuss. Hardly surprising, since news of the 4 August meeting of the **West Berkshire community health council** to decide its response to the applications only reached the public notice section of the *Reading Evening Post* on 4 August, minutes before its commencement. The Royal Berks ambulance service did give *Post* readers a week's notice of its trust intention, with an ad thoughtfully placed in the "Going Out" section.

● THE ROW between the medical establishment and Martin Page, editor of *The Good Doctor Guide* (as previewed in the *Evening Standard*) lingers on. Some specialists, such as Professor Sikora, head of **Hammersmith hospital's** cancer unit, agree that the lack of readily available information about specialists' skills and facilities is detrimental to the public good. Others believe a crap doctor guide would be more useful. But British Medical Association ethicists accuse Mr Page of inaccuracies and believe he should get prior consent from all named consultants.

● **PETERBOROUGH** hospital's notorious penny-pinching has led to the replacement of the doctors' bed linen with huge paper sheets, the consistency of rough toilet tissue. No one has yet managed more than 20 minutes' sleep and by the end of a busy night on call the sheets are invariably ripped to shreds. Junior doctors have tried protesting to "estate services management" in Eastlea House but have yet to find anyone at home. The reason? Eastlea House is undergoing refurbishment with new carpets and desks, fresh paint and tasteful bathroom suites for the penpushers.

● PRINCESS Diana's official opening of phase two of the **Manchester Royal Infirmary** (12 months after the real opening) passed without incident, largely because the outpatient department was closed for the day to accommodate her. Outpatient staff were obliged to take a day's annual leave, while duty staff were told that unless they arrived for work with their identification cards they would be refused entry and lose a day's pay.

'M.D.'



Bankers

READERS may recall how a Mr and Mrs Thomas (*Eye* 797) exceeded their £200 overdraft limit by £150 at the time of their daughter's birth and were charged an astonishing £447.50 by the friendly old Nat West as punishment.

Now the Thomases pay their salaries straight to their building society and have to all intents and purposes ceased trading from the Nat West account. The couple told the bank to stop all standing orders from it, and were in the process of paying back a personal loan and their overdraft when they were surprised to see that rather than diminishing the overdraft had *increased.*

Mr Thomas asked the bank how this could be. The Nat West replied that some charges passed in error. "The charge of £20 was passed in error. It was our intention to write to you regarding the loan transfer which was due. Regrettably cancellation of the charge was overlooked. In addition the direct debit of £14.49 to Bradford Insurance was paid in error and this sum has now been refunded. As a gesture of goodwill we are willing to make a refund of £130 as most of these fees relate to items returned which were of a lesser amount than the charge."

The bank ended its letter sending regards to the new baby.

● ***"INTEGRITY and credibility should be the key matters of concern to management," according to an article in the September issue of Banking World, the journal of the Chartered Institute of Bankers.***

"How could all those financial institutions have ignored Robert Maxwell's character and his somewhat chequered history? The young analyst is not necessarily able to recall such things from his memory but the facts, for example in the case of Robert Maxwell, were well documented and should immediately say something about the management of the borrower."

And, for that matter, of the magazine. For what the article neglects to mention is that, until his untimely demise last year, the publisher of Banking World was none other than Cap'n Bob.

BANKS aren't the only ones to rip off their customers: "friendly" building societies like the Halifax are in on the act too.

Mr Richard Charles has insured his house through the Halifax for nine years. When this year's premium fell due, he received an invoice for £322 based on the fact that he was an existing and reliable customer.

His curiosity aroused, he rang for an insurance quote anonymously posing as a first-time taker and was surprised to be quoted £249 for the same cover — a saving of £73. Then he received a quote for the same cover, again as a first-timer, from the Royal Bank of Scotland DirectLine for £121, a saving of £201, which he took up.

Such insurance practices actively discriminate against existing customers. More insidiously, banks and building societies take advantage of the fact that many people pay their premiums, along with their mortgages, by standing order or direct debit and will stick with existing and familiar arrangements rather than shop around.

POLICE 5

DENNIS TULLOCH, a black man from Stoke Newington, north London, is reading *Eye* articles on the police force in his area with more than cursory interest.

Tulloch is in prison for four years after being convicted of possession of crack cocaine with intent to supply it. Three police officers gave evidence that they were "on observation duty" in Sandringham Road on 11 September 1990, when they saw two black men "engaged in what appeared to be an exchange" outside the Ladbroke betting shop.

They rushed up to arrest the men, but one escaped and the other, Mr Tulloch, rushed into the betting shop. Two of the officers followed him, grabbed him and took him back into the street. Mr Tulloch was searched and eight wraps of cocaine were found on him.

Mr Tulloch said this was all nonsense. He said he never had drugs on him; that the police arrested him inside the betting shop, which they raided; and that they then blatantly planted the drugs. It was a straight case of the word of three police officers against one black man. Even so, there were difficulties with the police case.

All three officers insisted in court that the distance at which they saw the "exchange" was 30 to 50 feet. The prosecution, however, was forced to admit that the distance was 175 feet — and the evidence of the "exchange" was withdrawn. Nevertheless, the officers were adamant that the drugs were found on Mr Tulloch and the jury convicted him by a majority of 10 to 2.

What interests Mr Tulloch is the subsequent career of the police who convicted him, in particular PC Ronald Palumbo. He is one of eight police officers recently transferred from Stoke Newington in order to "facilitate" the inquiry being conducted by Det Supt Ian Russell of Scotland Yard into allegations of a protection racket and drug planting at Stoke Newington police station. On 17 June, PC Palumbo was suspended from duty.

The manner of his suspension is further testimony to the tremendous efficiency and promptness of the Crown Prosecution Service.

In December last year at Snaresbrook Crown Court, PC Palumbo gave evidence against a man called Paul Noel. When a fellow officer gave almost identical evidence in rather curious circumstances, Judge Pitman recalled Palumbo and suggested to him that he had colluded with the other officer after giving his evidence — despite knowing that he should not do so.

Palumbo denied the allegation, which as the case proceeded became clearer and clearer. Finally Judge Pitman recalled Palumbo and again put the collusion to him. When Palumbo denied it once more, the judge was furious. It was, he said, "perfectly plain" that Palumbo was lying on oath, and he told him in no uncertain terms that if that were proved to be so, it was a "very, very serious" matter.

The judge promptly sent the papers to the Crown Prosecution Service. Seven months later the CPS leapt into action and PC Palumbo was suspended. Mr Tulloch — and who knows how many others in prison at least partly because of what PC Palumbo said in court — is wondering how long he must wait to find if the transferred and suspended officer is to be charged with the perjury of which he was accused by a judge in open court.

Carl Tiflin built a high fire in the fireplace and told stories. He told about the wild man who ran naked through the country and had a tail and ears like a horse, and he told about the rabbit-cats of Moro Cojo that hopped into the trees for birds. He revived the famous Maxwell brothers who found a vein of gold and hid the traces of it so carefully that they could never find it again.

From 'The Red Pony' by John Steinbeck (1939)

MEMBERS of West Yorkshire police authority have had to remind Inspector Knacker that his powers are not limitless.

This follows an incident last month when police stopped coaches leaving Halifax after an Anti-Nazi League demonstration against a British National Party rally in the town.

The coach drivers were told that they could not leave until they allowed police on board the buses to film every passenger on video. Names and addresses of passengers were also demanded in the strongest terms.

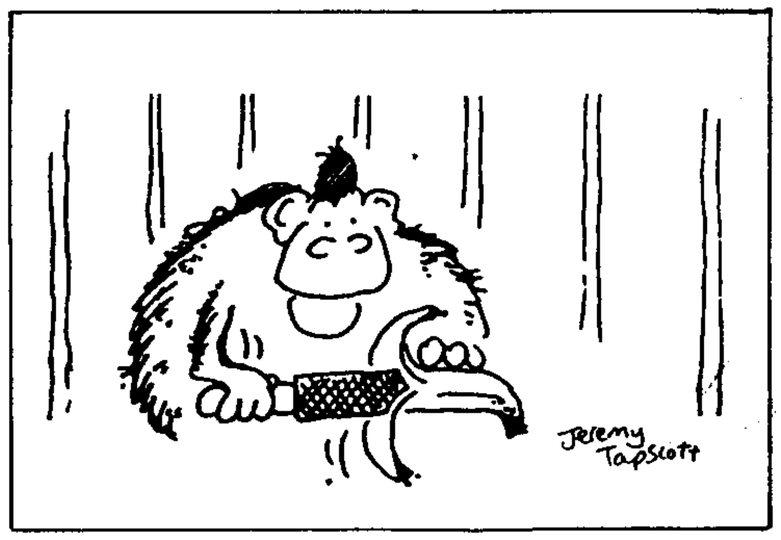
The force is being asked under exactly which law this procedure was carried out. Special Branch officers are meanwhile believed to be matching faces to names such as M. Mouse and D. Duck.

MORE news of Alison Halford's successor on Murkeyside as assistant chief constable, Pauline Clare.

That she does not wish to become "one of the boys" is not just connected with the Halford saga, it seems. For Mrs Clare has a former husband on the Murkeyside force, Chief Supt Chris McLeod of the St Helen's constabulary.

In its PR puffs of the appointment, the Murkeyside police authority reported that she was one of seven Catholic children of a family from Chorley. But it forget to mention the dissolution of her previous marriage.

Clare has been put in charge of the CID, and the MPA also forgets to mention her lack of CID experience.



THE apron-wearers who predominate in Britain's most progressive police force, West Midlands, certainly know how to look after their own — even if the copper in question has been caught with both hands in the till.

Former West Midlands Police Federation chief David Mytton was caught doing a Maxwell with federation funds and was given 15 months.

Under prison regulations all criminals have to do a minimum of three months in a closed nick (ie Winson Green) before they can be transferred to a softer open jail.

But faster than one could say masonic lodge, Mytton was transferred to the nation's easiest prison, Leyhill, near Bristol. He recently died of a heart attack at Glennside hospital after serving two months of his sentence.

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

THE INSANITY of the set-aside scheme, which agriculture minister John Gummer has hailed as the jewel in his common agricultural policy (CAP) reform package, continues unabated.

Barley barons will receive a cash handout for not growing anything on part of their land and this will qualify them for a special cash subsidy to compensate for the cut in price support!

This allows the subsidy minister to crow loudly about a breakthrough for taxpayers while quietly slipping the readies to his chums at Agriculture House, NFU headquarters. But he has made the set-aside rules so complicated it will take an army of crop police to stop the fiddles. Either that, or the set-aside field will enter the realms of popular mythology: like the marching olive groves of Tuscany or the time-travelling wheat crops from the Pas-de-Calais.

Land eligible for the £80-an-acre taxpayer handout must be set-aside from mid-December to mid-July — except when there's a crop on it in December and when the farmer wants to cultivate it in May. If it is cultivated in May it must be for clearing weeds, not for growing a crop. Cultivations for growing crops may not start until July.

Farmers can grow anything they like on set-aside land so long as it isn't going to be eaten by anyone, or fed to an animal that will be eaten by anyone. Crops like wheat, peas and potatoes are acceptable so long as the farmer can show that they're going to be turned into something inedible like axle grease. Then the Government will pay out.

Administering the scheme is certain to keep the bureaucrats busy peering through hedges and poring over satellite pictures. This, after all, is what the CAP is all about.

THE fat-cat barons of the NFU, meanwhile, are trying to stifle their chortles over the scheme. Though the rules are difficult, we can just about live with them says baron leader David Naish. This is about as close as any farmer gets to euphoria.

The fat-cats know that small hill farmers scratching a living in the uplands would have been much better off under the European Commission's original reform proposals. Yet they persuaded Gummer to clothe himself in the Union Flag and campaign for a package that didn't discriminate against the efficient UK farmer — the tycoon green-wellie who has grown fat on public subsidies.

This aspect of the package has had no public debate, not even in the farming press — a tribute to the power of Whitehall and the NFU to work together to obscure the facts.

ODD that owning a large farm should not exclude a politician from a job largely concerned with, er, handing over public funds to people who own large farms.

As a junior minister at the agriculture ministry, Earl Howe spends a lot of time working on grant schemes for landowners planting trees or setting up golf courses. He also happens to own a 1600-acre estate in Buckinghamshire.

The public would not tolerate a defence minister owning an aircraft factory or a health minister running a drug company on the side. So why, Old Muck wonders, is there so little concern over a farmer taking a senior job in a department which gives millions in public subsidies to producers like himself?

Old Macdonald

ALBERT

IF THINGS DONT LOOK UPGEORGE THE BANK'LL HAVE THE FARM!
BAR MEALS
YOU KNOW WHY DONT YOU? JUST LOOK AT THAT PLOUGHMANS! GERMAN PICKLE, FROGGIE APPLES, NEW ZEALAND CHEDDAR. HOW DO YOU EXPECT TO MAKE A LIVING WHEN YOU DONT EVEN EAT OUR OWN STUFF?
YOURE RIGHT GEORGE! BUY BRITISH! YOURE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT! LETS DRINK TO IT...
TWO BAVERIAN SPECIAL BREWS FRANK
LAGER
BLOODY 'ELL!

Letters

On the fiddle

Sir,

I think you go over the top on the basis of a single incident, and attack the wrong man, when you accuse Nigel Kennedy of slippery behaviour in not ensuring the payment of associated musicians for an event which took place 18 months ago (EYE *801, page 9).*

The man you should be addressing is his agent, but then, you are obviously short of copy and your aim is not to right a wrong but simply to take the piss. There is nothing wrong with Nigel that a good wash and a shave wouldn't cure.

Yours, with a neatly trimmed beard,
GORDON WOOD,

Cricklade Music Festival, Wilts.

Love my tender

Sir,

Having long been an avid follower of your Rotten Boroughs column and its accounts of the misdeeds of my fellow local government apparatchiks, I was dismayed to find myself featured in the most recent edition. Fortunately no one believes what they read there anyway.

One point in your story was untrue — the one about it being "against the rules" to allocate 40 percent of work to the in-house contractors when there are other tenderers. It's just unfortunate that it is this point that props up the rest of the story. Oh, and the quote attributed to me shows a flair for creative writing, if not accuracy — perhaps there is some sort of prize the author could be nominated for.

Finally, I have always thought my name was a bit of a disadvantage to a career in politics. I've thought of asking him indoors to marry me, but taking a man's name would be ideologically unsound and I do have my reputation to think of.

Yours from the borough that made John Major what he is today,
JANET CROOK,

Chair, environmental services committee, Lambeth.

Old soak

Sir,

As a civil engineer working in the water industry (not for Thames Water), I was somewhat concerned at Michael Cross's ludicrous suggestion (EYE *801) that we should waste one of the country's most precious natural resources merely to hit back at Thames Water's political contributions to the Conservative party.*

His puerile method of persuading TW's directors to reconsider their political donations policy is described as "simply leave a cold tap running". Having read his letter, I would suggest that Mr Cross is aptly suited to any policy concerning sheer simplicity.

At a time when London's water resources are being fully stretched, it is completely absurd to imply that those resources should be wasted merely because TW's directors are offending Michael Cross's political conscience. Hopefully, there will be no selfish individuals willing to cooperate with Mr Cross in his pathetic campaign.

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK WATERHOUSE,

Sanderstead, Surrey.

Called to account

Sir,

Is the current scandal involving the Duchess of York and Mr Johnny Bryan yet another example of the Fimbra's failure to regulate its members?

Yours faithfully,
R.P. GULLETT,

London EC3.

Kiss and tell

Sir,

I wonder if any other readers have noticed the remarkable dissimilarity between the current unforgiving attitude of the celebrated novelist Mr David Lodge towards an alleged plagiarist, and his attitude some 30 years ago when he sought to acquit himself of similar accusations.

His 1962 novel GINGER YOU'RE BARMY, *as Lodge himself confessed, borrowed the narrative structure and even the name of the narrator from Graham Greene's* THE QUIET AMERICAN. *Such "borrowing", however, Mr Lodge helpfully explained away in his author's note to the book by assuring us such "minor" similarities were merely "subliminal influences".*

Yours faithfully,
J.G. CLARK,

Worthing.

Second among equals

Sir,

It was interesting to note your correspondent's piece about a TIMES *hackette's inaccurate profile of Alastair Darling MP* (EYE *801). This was followed by an* EYE *article which also contained inaccuracies.*

Timothy Kirkhope was first elected in 1987, like Mr Darling, and so could not be said to be the "new Tory member" for Leeds North East. He retained the seat, but with a somewhat reduced majority at the last general election. It was the Labour candidate who came second rather than the Lib Dems.

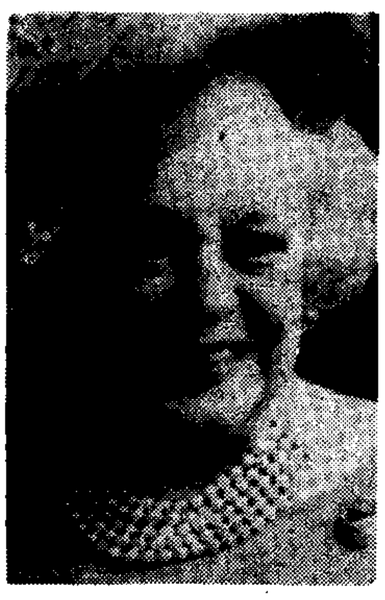
It can only be presumed that Backbiter has confused Mr Kirkhope with his fellow Tory, Keith Hampson, the member for Leeds North West who was returned with an enhanced majority.

Yours faithfully,
H.J. PRUNGLE,

Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear.

Lookalike

Cartland



Fraser

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the remarkable similarity between Dame Barbara Cartland and Lady Antonia Fraser. Surely they must be related?

Yours sincerely,
ENA B. STROBES,

London W1.

Any old iron

Sir,

I wholeheartedly agree with Piloti that Leeds is a ridiculous place to send the Tower of London Royal Armouries collection. York would be a much better choice.

Yours faithfully,
TIM RILEY,

Cheltenham, Glos.

Trafalgar Square eyes

Sir,

Piloti seems to forget that buildings are not commissioned solely to satisfy the aesthetic predilections of architectural journalists. I am not surprised that the Lloyd's building upsets Piloti visually, but surely he cannot deny that it is an extremely intricate and appropriate piece of City (as in Square Mile) planning which is unusually accessible to the pedestrian public and is astonishingly well put together. Recent revelations would suggest that the architects of this remarkable building have demonstrated a good deal more integrity than have its commissioning occupants.

No doubt Piloti also hates the Pompidou centre. Nevertheless it is probably the most popular and successful new public arts building in living memory and has made an enormous contribution to Parisian cultural life. Richard Rogers's proposal for the extension to the National Gallery offered the same civic opportunity in Trafalgar Square.

The Prince of Wales, like many members of the royal family, demonstrates a passion only for equestrian sports. If his personal intercession in the selection of an architect for the new gallery has denied London the possibility of having a public building of the quality of the Pompidou centre and instead foisted on it the lumpen piece of Disneyland banality that we are now stuck with, a proper architectural critic should deplore the situation rather than applaud it.

The procurement of public buildings is a highly complex and intriguing business. It would be a pity if anyone who was interested in finding out more about the process was put off reading Mr Appleyard's excellent biography of Richard Rogers because of Piloti's mean spirited attack on this informative and delightful book.

Yours sincerely,
GUS ALEXANDER,

London WC1.

Dab hands

Sir,

Keep up the good work. The Marchioness article (EYE *801) doesn't make it clear, but your readers should be aware that hand amputation is not necessary to fingerprint a corpse. Police and others have special equipment to do this gruesome job in situ.*

Yours etc,
ADRIAN MAXWELL,

London WC1.

In his bad books

Sir,

We read Mr Tim (Satan Hunter) Tate's defence of that-part-of-his-book-which-is-not-being-pulped-just-yet (EYE *801) with some interest and astonishment.*

When this organisation originally reviewed CHILDREN FOR THE DEVIL *we were stunned to discover that the chapter which attempted to establish a precedent for satanic ritual abuse contained 49 major historical inaccuracies. A cursory glance at the rest of the book revealed other errors.*

The book was so appallingly researched and inaccurate that we felt compelled to publish a 23-page critique. Interested parties may obtain a copy of WHAT A LOAD OF OLD CODSWALLOP *in return for a large SAE with three 24p stamps.*

Hacks usually have the good sense to keep their heads low when they get it wrong. Tate's whining simply makes things worse. Now we see that he cannot even accurately report the number of errors he has made.

In EYE *773 you chose the heading "Can't Read English" to cover Tate's rejoinder. Perhaps you should have chosen "Can't Count" for his last letter.*

Sincerely,
MARTIN KEANE,

Sub-culture Alternative Freedom Foundation, 6/8 Burley Lodge Rd, Leeds.

I-SPY *La Belle France*

Submitted by Alan Parker. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

South poor

Sir,

Re Letters EYE *801, I think I can kill two boring birds with one stone here. As an exiled southerner abroad I am happily marrying on 19 September a so-called "clod-hopping northern oik" (who is also left-handed and obviously not in the least bit ugly). I together with some of the southern guests will be staying at one of the usher's flats in Altringham the night before the wedding. They will be travelling to the wedding in Bury by Metrolink, particularly as the station is right by the church. Therefore I cannot think of a more useful or convenient transport system, unless they extended the link to the reception at Ramsbottom.*

Yours faithfully,
CHRIS AKERMAN,

Brussels.

PS: I, of course, being a materialistic southerner, will travel to the wedding by Rolls.

Gnome alone

Sir,

Having cancelled my subscription following your slur on women in EYE *798 ("Money, I'm home"), I was horrified to read in* EYE *800 that you are now persecuting garden gnomes.*

I myself am married to a garden gnome and many of my best friends are garden gnomes. Your cartoon depicts garden gnomes as small people with big noses, whose feet hang over the side of settees and who wear floppy hats and silly boots. Furthermore, you intimate that they all carry ornamental fishing rods and smoke ridiculous toy pipes.

I resent these inferences — my husband has never smoked a pipe in his life, and thanks to you he can no longer stand in the back garden without being taunted by our neighbours. You have ruined both of our lives and as a result I am cancelling his subscription as well.

Yours faithfully,
RACHEL GODFREY,

London SE25.

Back word

Sir,

*What a remarkable resemblance there is indeed between Rameses II and the Marquess of Chingford (*EYE *800).*

However, has anybody else noticed that you got the name captions the wrong way round? How ironic when you are always poking fun at the GURANIAD *and its readers, which, I'm proud to say, I'm one of. [sic]*

Yours faithfully,
STEVE JOSEPH,

Portstewart.

Colemanballs

"The supporters will be in great expectation of what they expect..."
BOBBY GOULD, Radio 4
(D.H. Green)

"Nobody who has seen the pictures can be remotely other than greatly concerned."
DOUGLAS HURD, Radio 4
(Robin Wilmot)

"Historically, this track is two seconds quicker tomorrow."
NIGEL MANSELL, Ceefax
(A.B. Sinclair)

"Well, someone once said that all the world's a stage, and on the top 40 scene stage Michael Jackson drops one place."
CAPITAL RADIO DJ
(Harry Thompson)

"Jon Lewis, a real Essex boy there... born in Isleworth, Middlesex."
TONY LEWIS, BBC2
(Keith Williams)

Olympicballs 2

"It's a great advantage to be able to hurdle with both legs."
DAVID COLEMAN, BBC1
(Anthony Greenall)

"The Spaniard wins in 3 minutes 40.12... the slowest possible winning time you can imagine."
DAVID COLEMAN, BBC
(Sean Ottewell)

"I don't think he's ever lost a race at 200 metres, except at 400..."
DAVID COLEMAN, BBC2
(Angie Laycock)

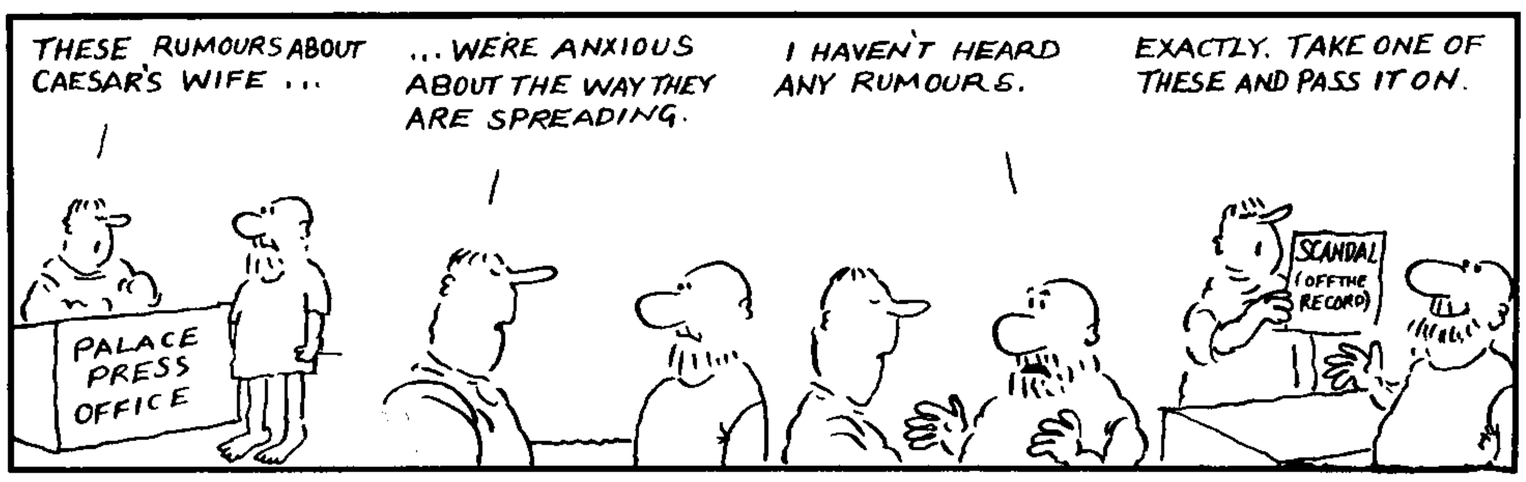
"He has just moved up the field from 25th to 30th."
DAVID COLEMAN, BBC
(Alan Lawton)

"Well, Burkart in the red — not only did he play it safely, he played it dangerously."
DAVID COLEMAN, BBC
(Tony Dyer)

£10 paid for contributions

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN


THESE RUMOURS ABOUT CAESAR'S WIFE ...
... WERE ANXIOUS ABOUT THE WAY THEY ARE SPREADING.
I HAVEN'T HEARD ANY RUMOURS.
EXACTLY. TAKE ONE OF THESE AND PASS IT ON.
PALACE PRESS OFFICE
SCANDAL (OFF THE RECORD)

Letter from **Japan**

from Our Own Correspondent

OUR government seems to be using the fine, tissue-like qualities of our constitution for purposes other than those for which it was intended. This piece of paper, after all, is now almost worthless since many of its articles are being ignored with the full blessing of our supreme court.

Take article 14, which states that "all of the people are equal under the law", and article 43 that requires parliament to be "representative of all the people". Electoral boundaries have changed so little since the war that in some rural constituencies a vote is worth three to six times that of urban areas — a fact that strongly favours the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

Is this unconstitutional? Yes, says the supreme court.

Although the court accepted a few years ago that the government could get away with a voting disparity of three to one, migration to the cities has now put the ratio well over even that generous limit. The supreme court appreciates this is less than democratic and admits the situation is unconstitutional.

What does it intend to do about it? Nothing.

Nullifying electoral results and trying to force boundary changes would, according to the court, "cause chaos". So law suits brought by private citizens trying to defend the constitution have been dismissed, and a situation that is admitted to be unconstitutional is allowed to continue.

Articles 14 and 43 are in good company. Another recent ruling by the supreme court, prompted by a citizens' petition, found that article 20 was also "probably" being violated. The suit concerned an official visit by our then prime minister Yasuhiro Nakasone to the Yasukuni shrine, where the spirits of our war-dead are enshrined. The site is a Mecca for right-wing extremists and hawkish politicians.

Article 20 clearly states: "The state and its organs shall refrain from religious education, or any other religious activity." While the court felt that Nakasone "probably" violated this article of the constitution, it is clear to most of us that his act of visiting the shrine in an official capacity and donating public money was a blatant violation of the constitution.

The supreme court's ruling did nothing to stop such visits, however. In August, to commemorate the end of the second world war, most of the cabinet, including prime minister Kiichi Miyazawa himself, visited Yasukuni only a few days after the ruling was made. The supreme court has done nothing to stop them.

And of course we now have the spectacle of Japanese troops about to be dispatched overseas for the first time since the last war in clear violation of article 9. That states: "Land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognised." The supreme court has continually rejected suits that question the legality of our land, sea and air forces, despite the fact that we now have the third-highest defence budget in the world.

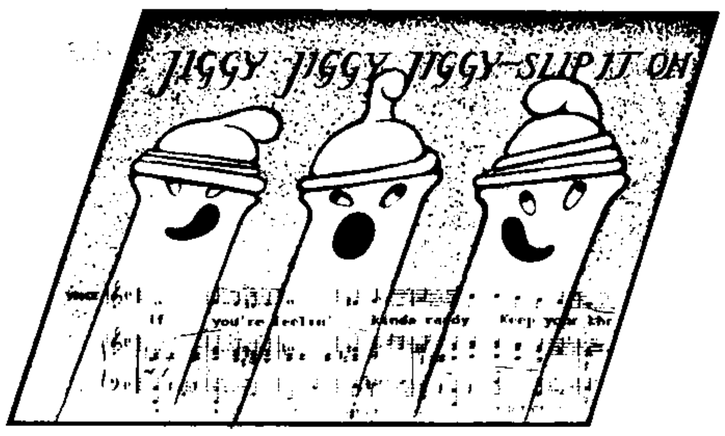
Many of us are now at a loss as to exactly what purpose the constitution serves, if violations are allowed to go unchallenged simply because they serve the interests of the LDP.

What happens if violations continue into areas of the constitution that cover freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and freedom from arbitrary arrest? Are they also to be ignored in the interests of preventing "chaos"?

Perhaps the supreme court justices have forgotten one of the most important constitutional provisions of all: article 76, sub-section three. "All judges," it says, shall be independent in the exercise of their conscience and shall be bound only by this constitution and the laws."

TRUE STORIES

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE



Illuminated by Bert Kitchen

INTERVIEWED while holding her guitar, Stacy Hart, "The Saucy Songstress", said: "I aim to win the NCW's — National Condom Week's — competition with my comedy-rap number 'Jiggy Jiggy Jiggy — Slip It On!' (title and chorus), with the lead lines: 'If you're feelin' kinda randy/Keep your three-pack fun-hats handy', that puts across a vital message for avoiding AIDS and is a change from writing serious music."

Hilda Kaplap, the NCW's spokesman, said: "Stacy's song is not for grannies to hear over Sunday lunch — but the Council loves it. First prize is a trophy, and second a year's supply of condoms."

MAJOR-GENERAL Chamjar Srimuang, the leader of Thailand's Langdong Dharma (Moral Power) Party, has expelled his third-in-command, Mr Richua Thoranong, after it was revealed that Mr Thoranong was the producer of TOKYO TEENAGER *and* TOPLESS HEAVEN, *two of the Far East's biggest box-office grossers.*

The General, who abstains from sex with his wife, said: "We discovered Mr Thgoranong's corruption after the campaign posters he issued showing himself leading a group of children across a busy road were compared with his walk-on appearance as a bra salesman in TOPLESS HEAVEN."

Answering the charges, Mr Thoranong said: "I shall fight the General's totally unfair decision. He has not seen the films. They reveal an understanding of ordinary people's problems."

MRS Milliyet Nevaz Ayaz, the wife of Turkey's Minister of Defence, Colonel Tikko Nevaz Ayaz, fainted when she and her husband were visiting the Pentagon and the Marine Guard of Honour raised the Tunisian, instead of the Turkish, flag.

SITTING at Amuru, Gulu County, Uganda, Judge J.J. Lonyat ordered Mr Jackson Olyel to be given 10 strokes of the cane after admitting that he was abstaining from sex with his wife "for commercial reasons". Speaking in a low voice, Mr Olyel admitted that he was the father of 14 children from three wives, but his fourth — new — wife, Sylvia Jane, remained unsatisfied.

"I am diversifying my acre from maize to simsim," he said, "and the effort needed takes all my strength."

Judge Lonyat said this was nonsense and he had better attend to Sylvia Jane "in the time-honoured way".

"WE WERE looking forward to a quiet weekend in the country," said Miss Naomi Brief, "but a police helicopter circled overhead for eight hours after a French tourist said he had seen a woman enter the woods and a shifty-looking man emerge ten minutes later carrying her dress. Later it was revealed that the man was Mr Ted Darren, a transvestite, who had gone into the wood to change in private."

INFORMATION: Watford Free Observer 13.8.92; Weekend Australian 25-26.7.92; Kampala New Vision 10.6.92; Turkish Daily News 18.7.92; Surrey News and Gazette 12.9.92. MONITORS: Robin Browne, Norman Reynolds, William Pine, Stewart Leask, William Lamont.

BIRT PLANS MASSIVE SHAKE-UP

'Revolution in Broadcasting' promised

by **Jane Thynne-Stuff**, Media Correspondent

THE biggest-ever shake-up in the history of the BBC is being masterminded at this very moment behind closed doors at Broadcasting House by BBC supremo-in-waiting John Birt.

A number of key figures are likely to be affected by what insiders are calling "The Night of the Long Knives".

They include:

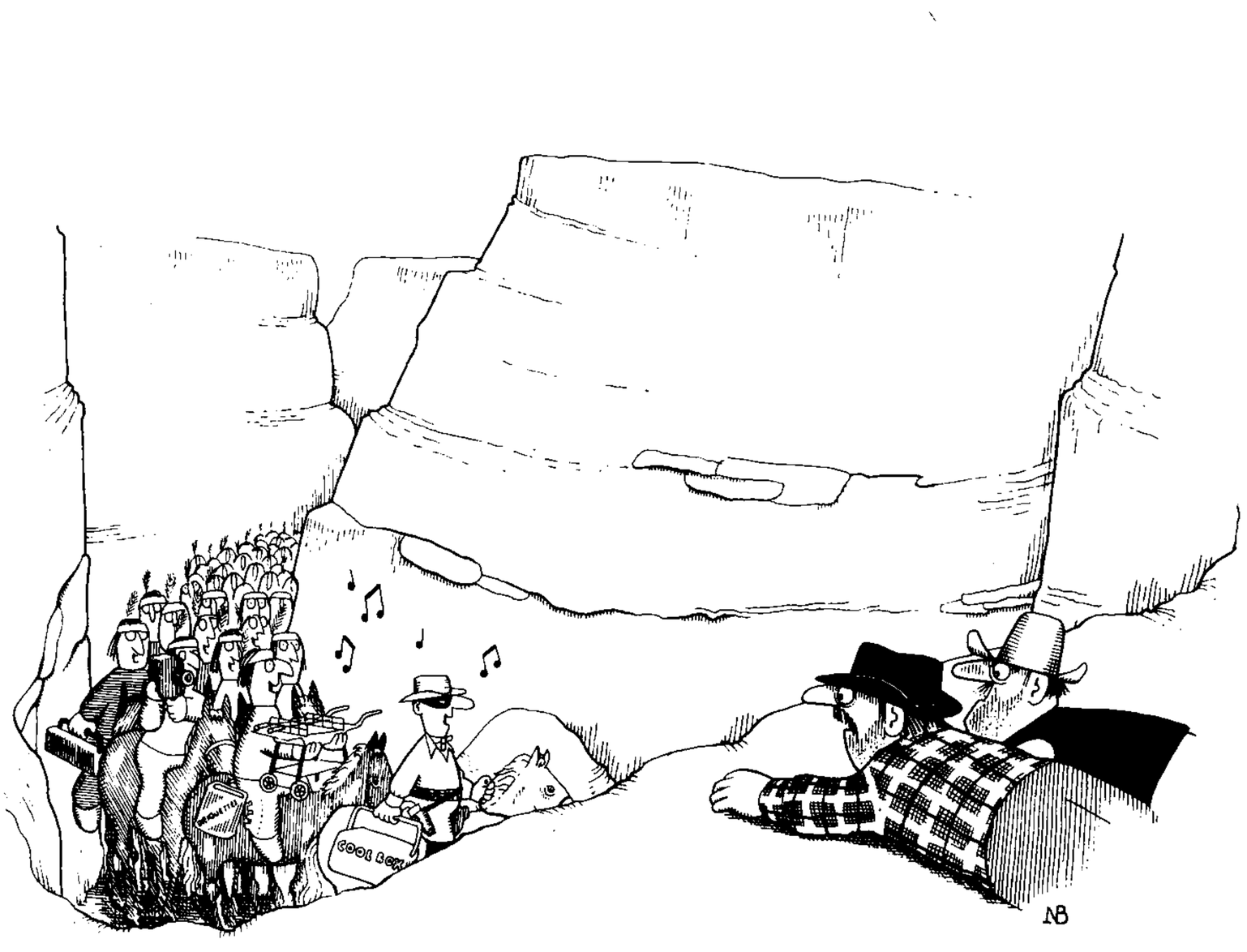
Jonathan Dimme, 52, high-flier, currently Controller Outside Broadcasts (BBC2). Dimme joined the BBC in 1975 and quickly made a name for himself at BBC (Bristol) with programmes like *Good Morning, Bristol!* and *Good Evening, Bristol!*

Alan Botney, 57, currently Head of Gardening and Cooking Programmes. A high-flier, Botney is BBC through and through. In the Seventies his programmes *In The Kitchen* and *In The Garden* revolutionised the BBC's approach to cooking and gardening programmes. But, with the coming of Birt, insiders are predicting an uncertain future for the man they are already calling "Yesterday's Botney".

David Switch, 59. Radio's high-flier, Switch came to the fore with high-profile radio comedy shows such as *Have You Heard This One?* and *The Joke Show* (starring Jimmy Jimps, Ron Knowles and Jerry Knox-Banker). Switch is tipped for a key post in John Birt's BBC of tomorrow.

John Birt, 62, all-powerful BBC supremo. Insiders are already predicting that Birt, once famous for his revolutionary LWT current affairs programme *The Current Affairs Programme*, will shortly be taken away by the Men in White Coats *(shurely shome mishtake? W.D.)*

Profiles in full pages 73-96



"Keep down! It's the Highly Gregarious Ranger!"

International Hilton Hotel Taiwan

Dear Bill,

Did you receive my pc from Seoul? I hope you got to the little tab before Daphne did. When I pulled it the girl in the shop said the same sort of thing was available live upstairs, but as I had three bodyguards in tow I was forced to make my excuses and leave.

Talking of which, thank you for your latest bundle of cuttings about friend Mellor. I caught the Boss leafing through it over a large Brownie on the flight here to Taiwan, and I think I detected a faint expression of amusement mingled with distaste. "He was never one of us, Denis," she breathed. "I warned John about keeping him at arm's length, but you know what John is like." It crossed my mind, over a third Glen Morangie, to toss in the name of Smarmy Cecil, but I wisely forbore.

Quite frankly, Bill, I've no idea where on earth we are. Some time last week I vaguely remember seeing the Alps, followed by a brief courtesy call on the Widow Glover for old times' sake, after which the boss took it into her head to freeload off some little Greek Johnny called Latsis who has a largish chalet in Gstaad, home as you probably know to some pretty seedy riff-raff in the Season. Damn my luck, who should be staying in the luxury hotel next door than our weirdo neighbour from Chester Square, the fiddler fellow with the talkative wife.

As I think I told you, the Boss is whiling away her moments in airports, etc, by recording her memoirs. This involves an entourage of cretinous debutantes who flock round her at any moment of the day or night while she lolls akimbo like that painted old harridan with the Pekinese who writes the bodice-rippers when high on vitamin pills. It was, therefore, thought expedient to suck up a bit of culture while it was going, and yours truly found himself wedged between a lot of smelly yodelling enthusiasts while Sir Yehudi waved his arms about to various mournful melodies of yesteryear. God rot the lot of them.

A pretty shattering hangover intervened, and when I came to I was out here being whizzed round the Far East on a lecture tour organised by the Boy Mark. As you know, the Yellow Peril are very difficult to tell apart, and when you've been in one Hilton you've seen them all, but I can't help thinking that M. may have chosen Formosa, or Taiwan as it's now called, deliberately. As you can imagine, one is left to one's own devices a good deal on this trip, and when I set out in search of a decent drink at the British Embassy I was told there wasn't one, this particular brand of Chink not being recognised by the FO. According to poor little Powell, whose arm has been twisted to stay on stream as an unpaid script-writer, it's all a lark to embarrass that hayseed Patten as Our Man in Mufti in Hong Kong, not to mention Greaser Hurd. All of which sounds fine to me.

Mark's "Roadie" on this tour is an unlikely Stage Door Johnny called Seymour, a doughty sniffer of the cork and bon viveur who I think used to be in advertising. He is very sound on the Ethnic Cleansing front and feels no qualms as he upends Brother Chink at the end of each Whistle-Stop, shaking his wallet and valuables into the Thatcher Foundation Piggy Bank.

The only new gimmick this time is excluding the reptiles, in fact because the Royals are hogging the headlines, but ostensibly, as the Boss announced, "for fear of anything being misreported in such a way as to embarrass little Mr Major in his trying time with the Pound and Maastricht". Leaks, I have no doubt, will be springing in all directions shortly.

By the way, I had the D of E on the blower the other night, sounding off about the Younger Generation and asking me whether it was right the Boy Mark was going inside. "In my day, Thatcher, we got up to no end of pranks and hanky-panky, but we made bloody sure we didn't get found out. You don't think this phone's being tapped, do you?"

Maurice is back in again, I hear. I knew he was heading for a bad patch after he burned down the Farmers' Tent at the Sevenoaks Show, and the message on his answering machine when I left, which tells the caller, whoever he or she may be, to perform an impossible act of contortionism, only served to underline my fears.

I'll give you a buzz if I ever get back.

Yours going down with the Hang Sen,

Denis

The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Monday

Today is a very considerably historic day. Oh yes. My grand conference to stop the war in Yugoslavia began this morning. All the different leaders were there. Mr Hurd had also offered to write my speech, but in view of the importance of the occasion, I insisted that the words would be my own.

This is what I said: "Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for coming from such a long way away to my special conference. I must tell you" (this was in my special solemn voice) "we have all been very considerably concerned by the pictures we have seen on our televisions of what you are all getting up to in your country and IT MUST STOP IMMEDIATELY!"

I could tell at once that my speech had made a good impression on all the delegates, because they sat looking very thoughtful and for a long time nobody said anything. Then Mr Hurd produced his 48-point plan for Peace In Our Time, and all the men from Yugoslavia began shouting at one another and waving their fists. Mr Hurd whispered to me that this was the way people did business in that part of the world, and that it showed my conference had got off to a flying start.

Tuesday

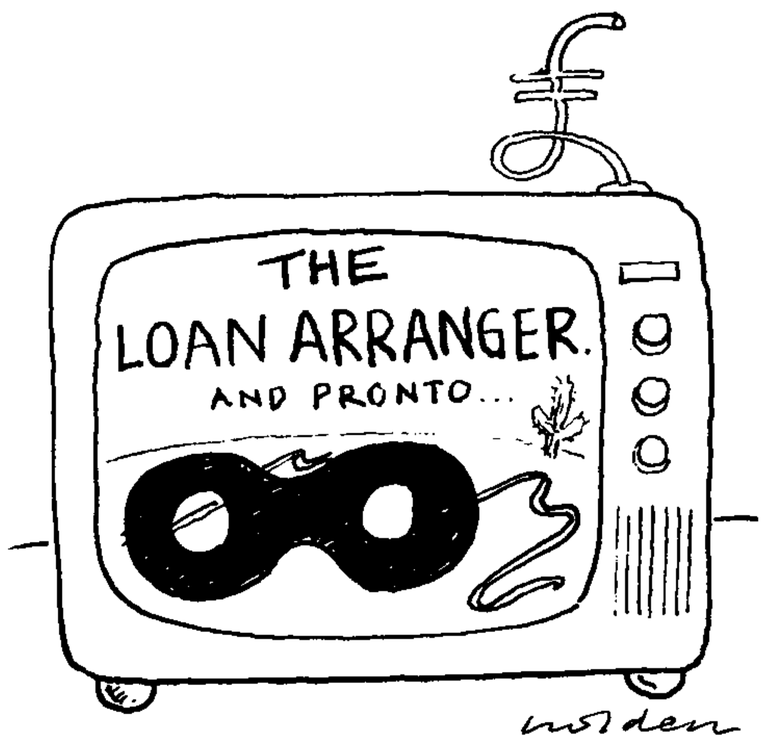
Today my great Yugoslav conference came to a triumphant conclusion. Mr Hurd explained that they had all agreed that as soon as they got home they would put our 48-point Peace Plan into immediate effect. This means that peace has come at last, thanks entirely to my firm handling of the situation. It is hard to imagine that Mrs Thatcher could have persuaded a lot of foreigners to stop fighting in this way.

When I returned to Downing Street for a glass of sherry to celebrate my diplomatic triumph, my wife Norman had turned on the television for the news. "I thought you said the fighting was over," she said, as we saw a big building being blown up. "It is," I explained, "but they won't have got home yet to tell everyone to stop."

Wednesday

We all got up very early this morning to see Norma Lamont making his very important statement about what he was going to do to save the economy. He had told me last night in confidence that he had something really special up his sleeve, which would put an end to all the gloomy talk and send the pound soaring through the roof.

Mr Waldegrave had brought in three extra television sets, so that we could watch Mr Lamont pulling off his economic miracle on all four channels simultaneously! Sure enough, at exactly 8.08, we saw Norma coming out of No. 11 to face hundreds of microphones and cameras. "I am going to act firmly indeed to stop all this speculation," he said in a very stern voice, which he had obviously copied from me. "That is why I have decided to do nothing, to show that I have complete confidence in the government's policies."



Later Norman rushed in to say she had just seen a headline in the Evening Standard saying "Pound Collapses To New Low". I had to explain to her that obviously the gentleman in the City had not yet had time to read what Norma had said.

Thursday

There is more good news today, this time about our education policy. More children than ever have passed their GCSE exams. This shows that my plans to improve standards are really paying off, and that Britain's schools are now in no small measure the best in the world.

When I explained this to the Cabinet, there was a coughing noise from the end of the table and my new friend Mr Patten (not the one who's gone to Hong Kong) said he would just like to draw a little matter to my attention. Apparently some inspectors had written a top-secret report saying that the exams in schools had been made so easy that anyone could pass them. I had to point out to him very firmly and sternly that obviously the inspectors had written their report some time ago, and when they saw how well the children had done this year they would no doubt revise their opinion.

Friday

I don't know what's got into Norma. Having said he was going to do nothing about the pound, he has suddenly announced that he is going to borrow billions of dollars to prop it up. In my judgement this is a most imprudent act and I told him so. "I thought you were going to do nothing," I said in my stern voice. "Now we will have to pay all this money back."

"I hadn't thought of that, Prime Minister," he said.

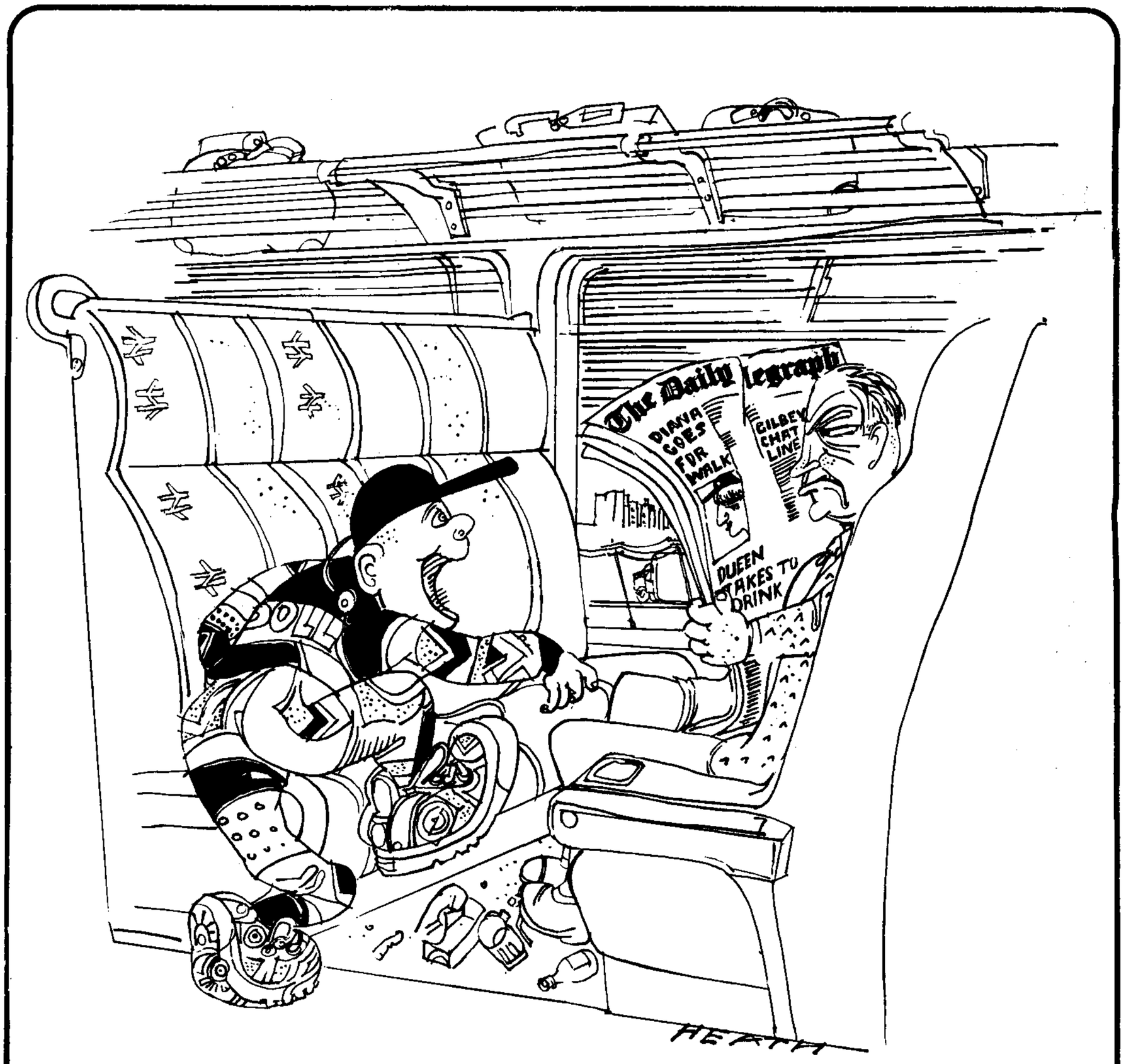
Saturday

My friend Jeffrey Archer has sent me a revised version of his next book, which is now called *Bowman Steps In*. In the new version he describes the country as being in the middle of a terrible crisis, with civil wars in Europe, the pound plummeting and children being unable to read or write. The prime minister James Colonel is completely at sea, and begs Lord Bowman to renounce his peerage and become prime minister. It is certainly a gripping tale, even though it is so completely removed from the real world we live in!

Where Are They Now?

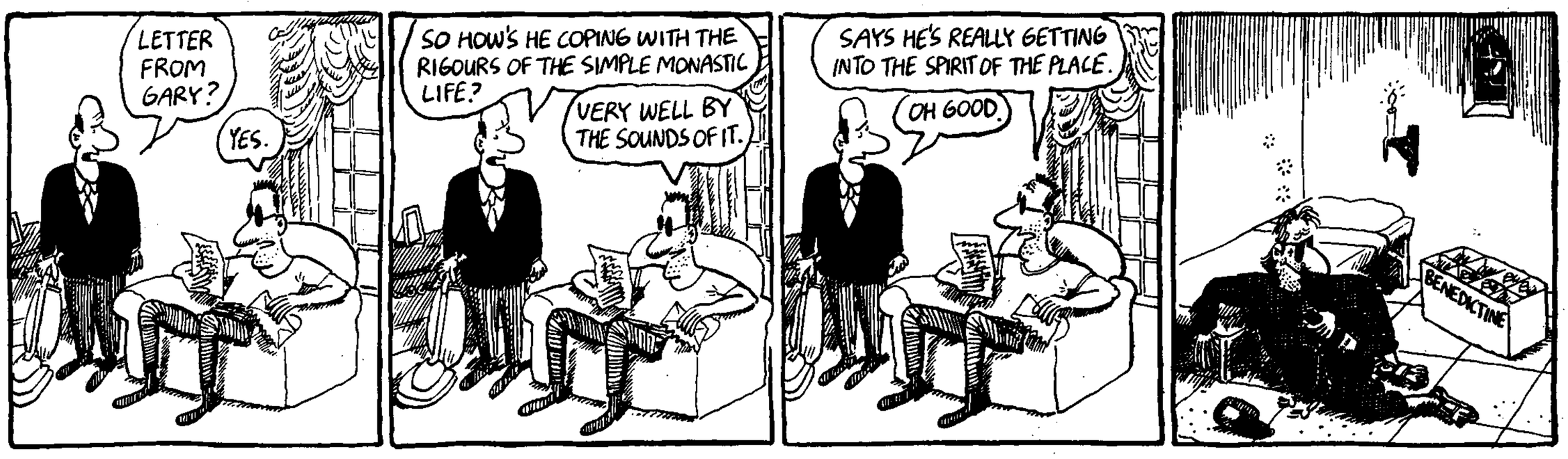
No. 94: John Smith

In the summer of 1992, the nation held its breath as the battle to pick a new leader of the Labour Party wound to its tumultuous climax. Who was to be the man who might well be Britain's next prime minister? Would it be the popular, eloquent, laser-sharp Scottish lawyer John Smith, whose brilliant plan to increase taxes had so nearly secured a Labour victory only three months before? Or would it be the dynamic, charismatic, New Zealand-born Bryan Gould? At last the tense days of waiting came to an end. To everyone's astonishment, it was revealed that the man who could shape the nation's destinies over the next ten years was Mr Smith. For the next few days no one in Britain could think of anything else. Every newspaper was filled with articles headed LABOUR'S NEW MAN OF DESTINY, or YES, IT'S A LEADER FOR THE NINETIES! Then the excitement died away, and Mr Smith retired back to the obscurity of the Scottish mists from whence he had come.



Great Bores Of Today.

"... it's fantastic I saw it when it came out and I saw it again on TV the other night it's about this creature that lives in the trees and it can change its shape whenever it likes and there are these soldiers right? and they're paid to rescue these Americans anyway this thing has the power to do anything only he can't see you if you're covered in mud and in this scene the bloke's standing there and the next minute without any warning he's blown away have you seen it? you must have seen it everyone's seen it anyway you see the creature and he's got this computer on his wrist so that he can heal himself just by pushing a special button and this Indian sort of bloke wants to fight him with a knife but he gets blown away his eyeball's all over the ground and when he takes off his helmet and you see his face it's URGGGGHH! puke! ..."


LETTER FROM GARY?
YES.
SO HOW'S HE COPING WITH THE RIGOURS OF THE SIMPLE MONASTIC LIFE?
VERY WELL BY THE SOUNDS OF IT.
SAYS HE'S REALLY GETTING INTO THE SPIRIT OF THE PLACE.
OH GOOD.
BENEDICTINE

WORLD OF ART

£4m SKIP LEFT TO NATION

by Our Arts Correspondent **Brine R. Sewell**

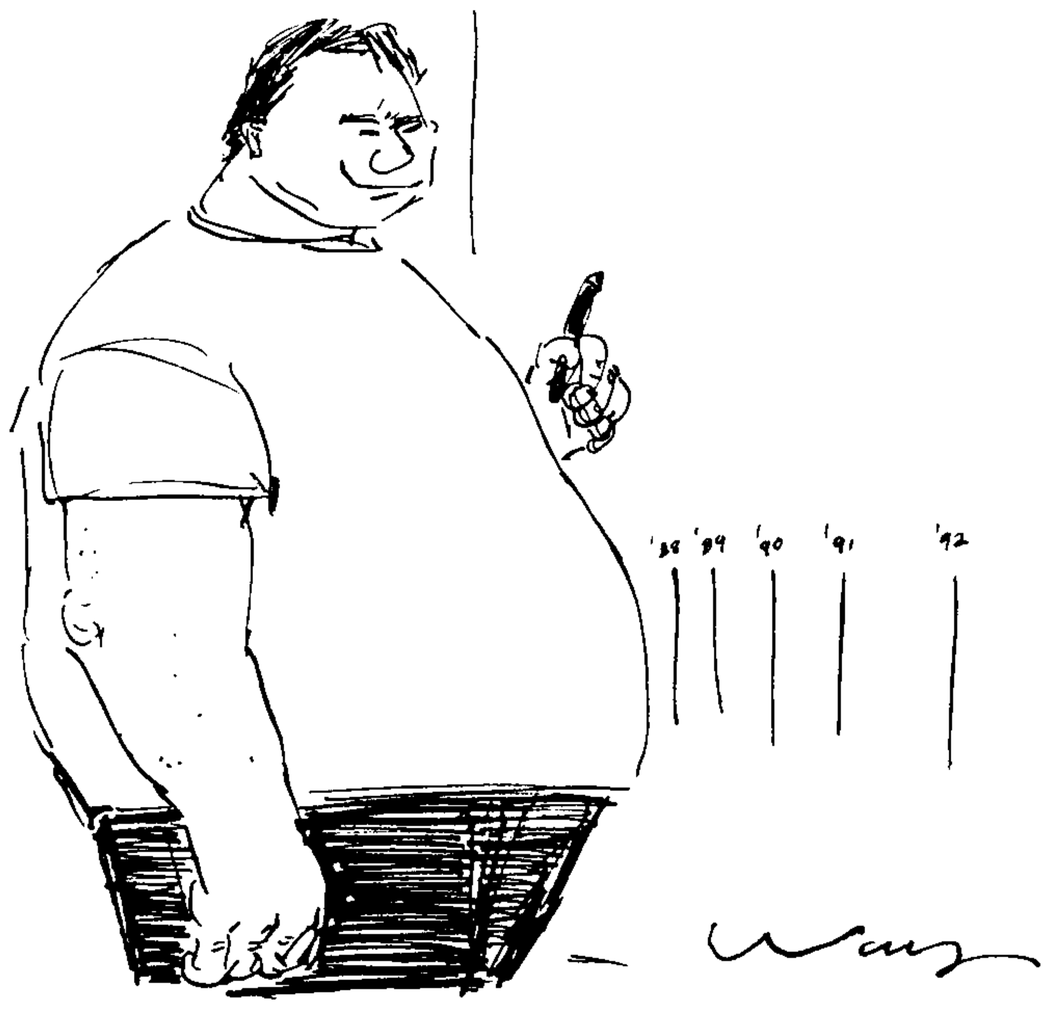
A priceless skip, formerly the studio of Britain's greatest 20th century painter, Mr Francis Bacon, has been presented to the nation.

The news was revealed yesterday by his lifelong companion and confidant Mr Johnny Rufftrade, 22, who said: "The skip is part of Britain's artistic heritage. Francis left it to me and I would like to pass it on to the nation."

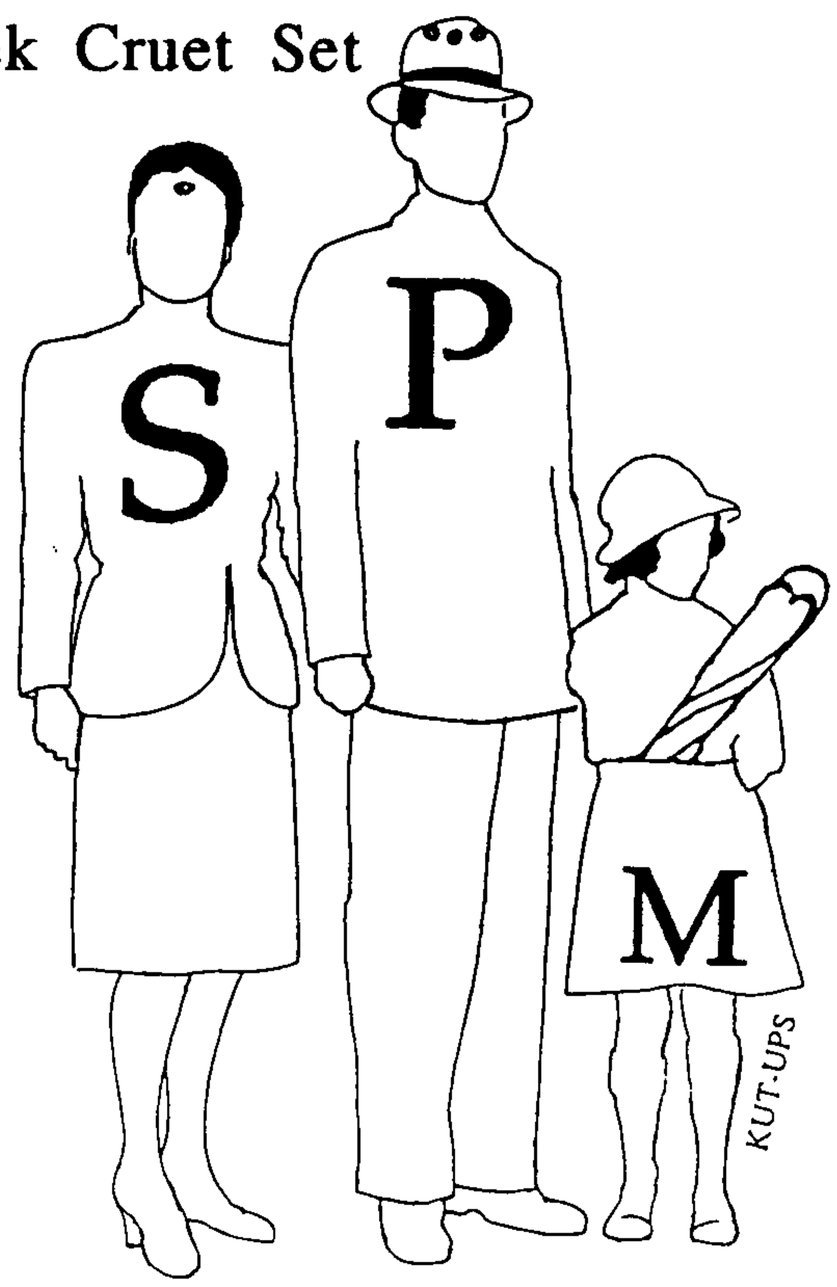
Mr Rufftrade described the contents of the skip as "a fascinating glimpse into the mind of a genius".

Streaky

In addition to several half-empty tubes of paint and a number of stiff old brushes, the skip contains one baseball boot, a length of linoleum (slightly scuffed), a plastic toilet seat (some cigarette burns), one pot Waitrose yoghurt (sell-by date Jan. '82), 3 bots. various vodkas (empty), one spider plant in pot (dead), numerous supermarket bags, and a copy (mint) of Yellow Pages (London Area) 1975.



Dalek Cruet Set



BBC MAN'S NIGHT OF SHAME

by Our Media Staff **Breakfast O'Television**

An elderly, white-haired businessman spoke frankly yesterday at his swanky, 5-bedroom Surrey home of his "deep feelings of shame" following revelations in a Sunday newspaper.

Mr Frank Boffo, 63, had been seen on several occasions entering and leaving a shady Shepherds Bush "establishment", where he had been involved in "bizarre practices" with a number of men and women.

With his wife sitting tight-lipped by his side, Mr Boffo told waiting newsmen how he had felt drawn to the west London "studios", known to their habitués as the "TV Centre", by "an overwhelming urge".

Brazen Hussey

Boffo, 72, explained how he had developed a taste for "BBC" when he was going through a mid-life crisis some years ago.

"I was feeling rather lost at the time," he said, "and then one day I found myself in this place where you can expose yourself in public in front of millions of people, and get paid for it.

"I confess I got a great buzz out of it. They take you into a makeup room, where pretty girls comb your hair and put powder all over you. Then another pretty girl leads you to the studio, where there are bright lights and you are the centre of attention.

Love Nesta

"I did it many times," said Mr Boffo, "but now I feel ashamed."

Said his wife of 38 years, Mrs Nesta Boffo: "Frank has been very silly, but I am standing by him. I do not know why the press have done this to him. After all, it's not as if he is a really big star, like Major Ron or that George Mellor."

Sandy Gall is 82.

IS THIS DI'S MYSTERY MAN?

by our Royal Staff

James Whitaker-Almadeup

NEW "love-tapes" of phone calls between Princess Diana and a mystery male voice are published in the *Daily Mellor* today.

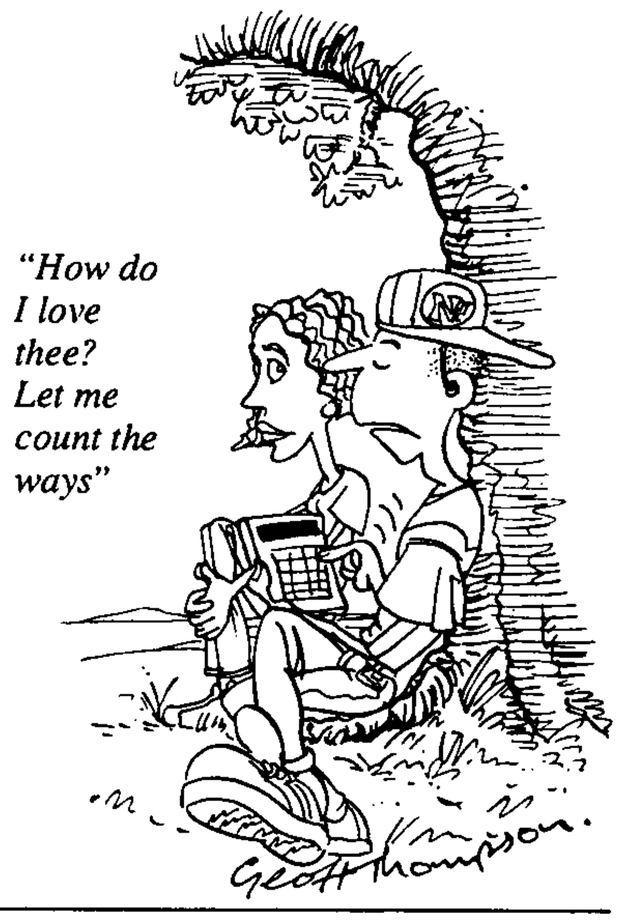
The transcripts, which we print below, will undoubtedly spark off a new crisis to rock the already unstable House of Windsor.

Shock

But who is the mystery man at the other end of the line?

He is:

- Obviously Upper Class. His public school accent gives him away at once.
- A close friend of the Princess. He calls her "Diana" and knows the names of her children.
- He uses words and phrases like "Appalling" and "My Mother the Queen".



THOSE ROYAL LOVE TAPES IN FULL

MAN: Hullo! It's me.

WOMAN: Who?

MAN: Charles.

WOMAN: Oh.

MAN: You remember.

WOMAN: Yeah.

ANOTHER MAN: Is that you, Antonia? I want you to suck my toes.

MAN: I think there must be a crossed line. It really is appalling.

THIRD MAN: Is that you, Squidgy?

YES! IT'S THE OUTRAGEOUS NEW STRIP FROM BRITAIN'S TOP COMICS

LIZ
BY "CUTTER" PERKINS AND RGJ
WHY AYE! IT'S 'FAT' JIMMY WI' AN AULD LADA. HE'S COME TA TEK WOR SQUIDGY FARMING AGAIN.
SORRY IT'S NOT THE CABRIOLET. I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D WANT HER GOING TOPLESS AS WELL.
JUST DIVVUNT GI' HER ANY SOLIDS OR YA'LL NEVVA GET THE SEATS CLEAN
!
WE NEVER 'AD THIS CARRY ON IN MY DAY!
SOB!
OVERNITE BAG
SICK BAG
AN' I THOUGHT SHE DIVVUNT HAVE ANY APPETITE!
GILBEY'S 'ERE!
RACING
STARTING PRICES
MEK MINE A LARGE 'UN! BURP!
HOWAY! ARE YE THE BASTARD THAT'S DICKIN' WOR MISSUS?
WELL, PAL, TEK 'ER OFF US HANDS AN' WE'LL CHUCK IN A DUCHESS FER NOWT!

Lines Written On The Publication Of The Royal Love Tapes

by the late Poet Laureate
Sir John Betjeperson
(as dictated to the late Doris Stokes)

Sitting in his smart Mercedes,
In a lay-by just near Slough,
Jimmy dials his loved one's number,
"Yes, I'm putting you through now."

"Squidgy, darling, can you hear me?"
"Wait, I'll turn the telly down."
"Yes, that's better — you're much clearer,
Can we meet next week, in town?"

"Monday's full, and Tuesday's hopeless.
Wednesday would be so much better.
When I've picked up Wills from riding.
Oojums, did you get my letter?"

"Darling Squidgy, how I love you.
Have you got my jumper on?
Yes, you know the one I gave you,
When we met with Major Ron."

"Oojums, I am so unhappy.
I'm in the Family's bad books.
His Nibs ignores me, like his Mater
And Granny gives me dirty looks."

"Never mind, my Squidgy darling,
Only four days till we meet.
Usual place and usual time, dear.
And, sweetest Squidgy — be discreet."

© The Late Sir John Lycett-Green

"Don't worry about it, Derek.
Lots of famous alcoholics have been writers!"

TV HIGHLIGHTS

HURD AND MAJOR

by P. G. Wodehouse

(Jazzy music — Classical FM, for it is it.)

MAJOR *(seated behind upside-down copy of Daily Telegraph):* I say, Hurd, it says here that the French are going in for one of these referendum jobs.

HURD *(steaming hat with large iron):* So I have been led to believe, sir.

MAJOR: So come September 20th all our Frog friends are going to be given the chance to nip down to the local *mairie* and *voter oui ou non* to this Maastricht business? You didn't know I was a bit of a bally linguist, eh, Hurd?

HURD: Indeed no, sir. Your fluency in the French tongue is truly remarkable.

MAJOR: But I thought we were against letting the people decide and all that. I mean Maastricht is far too complicated for the jolly old man in the street to grasp. Isn't that our line, Hurd?

HURD: Indeed, sir. That is why we were so well advised not to have permitted such an exercise in Britain.

MAJOR: So what you're saying, Hurd, is that we don't need to take any notice of whether our garlic-chewing cousins say "oui" or "non"?

HURD: On the contrary, sir, I think it would be in our best interests to say that whatever the French decide, we will go along with.

MAJOR: But dash it all, Hurd — you mean we can't allow our own chaps to go out and give a "yea" or "nay" to friend Maastricht, but when it comes to the old Parley-voo, whatever they decide we've got to fall in behind it?

HURD: That is what, in all the circumstances, I would advise. It is after all, sir, the great advantage of our membership of the European Community that we should let the foreigners decide things for us.

MAJOR: I hadn't thought of it like that, Hurd. You mean we can just sit back and do nothing?

HURD: Precisely, sir. Will you be taking claret with your dinner tonight?

MAJOR: I wouldn't say "non" to that. I say Hurd, you really know votre oignons!

HURD: I always endeavour to give satisfaction, sir!

St Cake's School

Maastricht Term begins today. There are 4,679 boys in the school, 12 girls and 14 UN Peacekeepers. M.P.V. Lovetapes (Gilbey's) is Senior Cellphone. H.R.H. Squidgy (Spencer's) is Head Girl. Signor Luigi Paparazzo has been appointed Director of the Photojournalism Studies Centre. Toesuckers will take place at Fergie's Patch on 24 November. The Sackville-West Lecture will be given in the Russell Harty Memorial Hall on 1 December: Speaker Ms Deirdre Spart on "Whither The Lesbian Novel In The Nineties?" There will be a performance of Alan Bennett's *Mrs Fothergill Has A Hip Replacement* in the Kevin Maxwell Drama Workshop on 13 December (tickets from the Bursar, Maj. Terre-Blanche at White Bottoms, Sjambok Crescent). Ethnic Cleansing will be on 19 December. There will be no Carol Service this year.

UP FRONTERS

Continuing the hugely popular Sunday Supplement feature you can read exclusively in every paper...

"Am I making the Grade?" asks Channel Four's boss. But it looks like tennis ace Monica Seles is just taking the Michael — out for supper, that is! The service better be good!

It's Helldorado for Spanish soap star Kathy Pitkin when she plays footsie under the table with soccer ace Maradona. Still, the romance could Fizzle out if he doesn't keep his hands of God to himself.

Don't tell Martyn Lewis the news, but the lady he's leaning on is the doyenne of the Sunday papers, Katherine Whitehorne. Relax, Marty, she's only an Observer!

"Go west, young man!" Bob Hoskins gives funny man Harry Enfield some advice about having a long run on television. LoadsaBob!

The motto is "hair today" for bald-pated TV sleuth David "Poirot" Suchet. And who's the lady in the pearls and wig? It's Lady Helen Windsor. Better "beehive" yourself, Ma'am, or you're likely to be investigated!!

We're all going on a Summer Holiday — or, rather, Cliff Richard is. Who's the Living Doll he's holding tight? It's tennis ace Monica Seles *(You've had her already. Ed.)* Love-fifty-two for pop's Peter Pan!

(That's enough pisspoor captions by clapped-out hacks to dreary PR photos. Ed.)

DIARY

How to write as good as what I write like (1): "Creating the Comic Name". Let's take one example from a recent milestone in comic fiction — *Changing Places* by David Lodge. The main character is a brash American acadaemic. The author had to choose a name for him which would reflect the Jamesian cultural disparity between old/new and England/America to heightened comic effect. The name he finally selected, after a great deal of thought and research, was "Morris Zapp" — a brilliant choice, rich in mimetic and phonetic overtones yet still firmly based in the naturalistic tradition.

Incidentally, in my new novel, I am struggling to think of a suitable name for a small provincial novelist who continually seems to borrow off other writers' creations. The name "David" — historically diminutive — might suggest the limits of his talent, but I am now searching for a surname that might subliminally recall his tendency to move in on and live off other people's ready-furnished creations. Any suggestions?

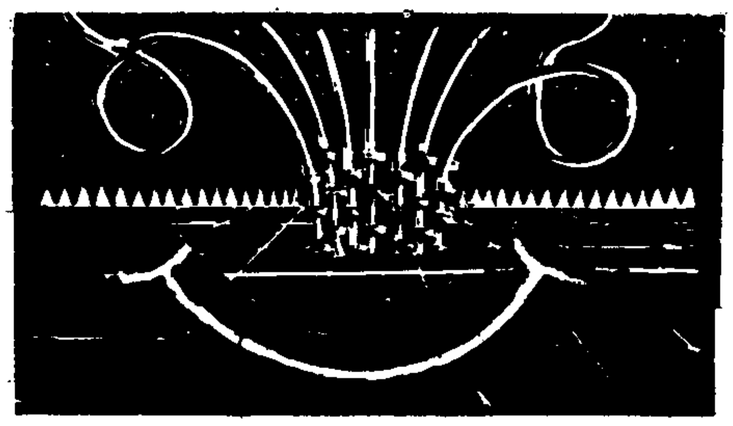
What have been called my "exuberant satirical gifts" and "profound sense of the interactive discourse" have, in recent weeks, been left standing by what, for want of a better word, one must call reality.

For the best part of a year, I had been employing a wide range of critico-creative skills — didactic, modernist, post-modernist, structuro-polyphonic, post-Jamesian cultural-historical — in the examination of "The Art of Fiction" for a leading Sunday newspaper. In this notable series, I would instruct readers exactly how novelists such as Fielding, James, Greene and Lodge manage to achieve their authorial effects. For instance, when a novelist of the calibre of, say, Lodge, writes a sentence like:

"I am wonderful," he declared, "and my books are serio-comic masterpieces"

I would examine how the authorial voice captures such an exuberant and authentic tone of quasi-acadaemic self-promoting smugness in just one short sentence.

In one of these masterclasses, I chose one outstanding modern novel — Lodge's *Nice Work* — and showed how, by a process of almost intangible textual assimilation acquiring a range of literary skills, parodic, historic, comic, ironic, spasmodic, Lodge was able to cross-relate with the plot of a Victorian novel — Gaskell's *North and South* — and, by placing it in a modern context, to explore a variety of literary, psychological and socio-economic themes, all to telling effect. Result: *a highly original and imaginative use of post-modernist literary cross-reference.*



DAVID LODGE

I then revealed that a vastly lesser-known novelist, a female whose work had so far failed to win her any plaudits whatsoever from cultural or literary critics, had come by the plot for her latest potboiler. She had simply borrowed large chunks of the plot of Gaskell's *North and South*, repositioning it against a modern background. Result: *out-and-out plagiarism by an obscure writer revealing a marked lack of originality and imagination.*

And this is where the plot becomes as amusing and unpredictable as a novel by, say, Lodge. The obscure and unimportant female "novelist" reveals that she has been plunged even further into obscurity. Meanwhile, the critically-acclaimed, prize-winning novelist known for his exuberant satirical gifts continues to grow more and more successful. Which all goes to show that, as I once mentioned in my series of international lectures, "Mimesis and Diagesis in Modern Fiction", happy endings can occur in life as well as in literature!

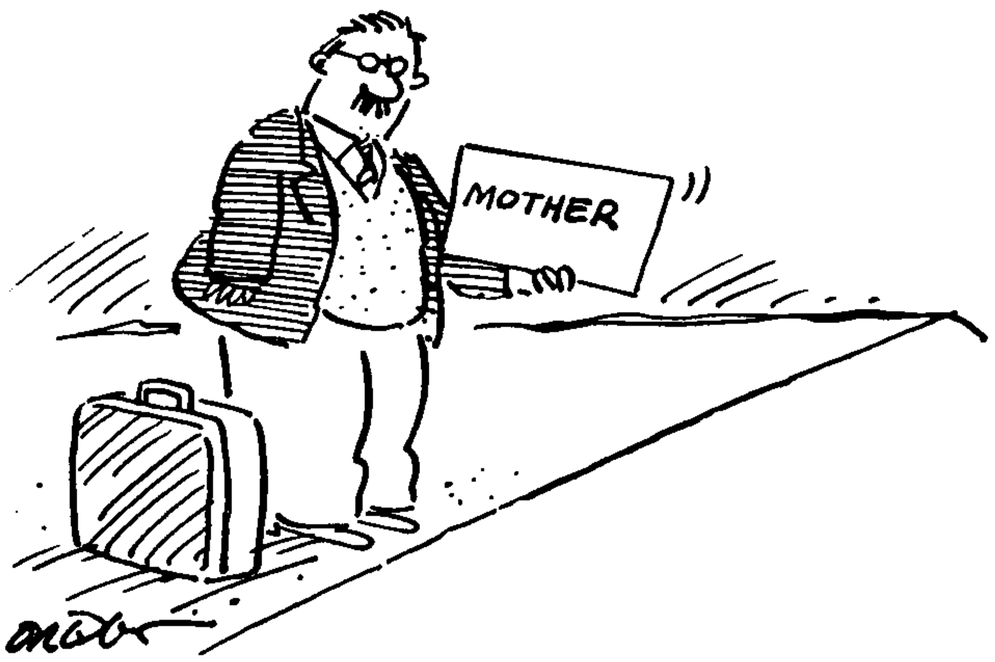
How to write as good as what I write like (2): "Nodding Towards Current Theory". Let's take a look at a ground-breaking comic novel: say, *Funny Old Life* (1986) by David Lodge. Ostensibly, this is a novel about acadaemic "A" entering the life of acadaemic "B" and vice-versa — and all to brilliantly rich comic effect! But the genius of *Funny Old Life* — and the reason the critics seemed to like it so much — is that, to use techno-critical phraseology, it "nods" at fashionable theories relating to deconstructionism and post-modernism and decomposition without ever letting them "get in the way". Thus, five paragraphs from the end of chapter 5, the authorial voice wonders whether he was right to name the main character "Morris" rather than "Horace" or "Boris". Such a device undermines the normal kind of authority which a text claims, conveying a dislocating sense of self-questioning provisionality, greatly appealing to the acadaemic reader. But after two sentences, the authorial voice considers that "Morris" was the correct choice all along, and the story proceeds in rollicking style right up to the side-splitting conclusion, when "B" realises he has more in common with "A" than perhaps he originally thought!! Result: critics and readers are happy, and *Funny Old Life* goes into a ninth impression.

Let's shift the discourse. What makes a novelist really comic? It's usually a mixture of incongruitive disparities within interactive fictive arenas, but of course in my case it's the hairstyle.

The Chief Stylist for Penguin Books hit upon the notion of giving me a greasy-haired acadaemic fringe circa 1971 as a way of visually signifying, in the Barthian sense, that, to employ an idiomatic speech-formula, "This Author-Figure is a complete Nerd", an acronym, the in-house semiologists tell me, for Neo-Exegetic Reactive Deconstructionist.

Since then, my sales worldwide have shot up, partly because, the statisticians tell me, up to 40% of my most devoted readers think that I am in fact Chris de Burgh, creator of "Lady in Red" and many other chart-topping melodies. Topped off with some brand-new flared rust-coloured cords and a new, wry, knowing look on my dust-jackets, by the mid-Nineties I am hoping to be internationally acknowledged as the most comic novelist around.

How to write as good as what I write like (3): "Creating an Imaginary World". Two major 20th century British novelists — Bradbury (b. 1932) and Lodge (b. 1935) — have created an imaginary tragic-comic world in which two Professors on the international lecture circuit write comic novels about the self-absorption of Professors on the international lecture circuit and then pay generous tribute on the international lecture circuit to each other's comic novels about the self-absorption of the international lecture circuit. Stretching the boundaries of the novel is what good writing's all about, and for this I proudly salute them.



It says it got the side-on colour picture of the duchess with one breast exposed, along with three others inside, from the European TV magazine Cine Tele Revue.

Oxford Mail

In the home

Ethnic cleansing: You and your shower unit

Jersey Evening Post

Literary Review

Sapphocated by love

Written On The Body
Jeanette Winterson
(Jonathan Cape, £13.99)

POOR Jeanette Winterson. One wants so much to like her. Lesbian, of what used to be called "humble origins", admired by the type of people who don't generally read "serious" fiction — just the sort of young iconoclast to set against the middle-class back-scratchers who run literary London and smash them into fragments.

And yet as *Guardian* Women's page profile succeeds *Guardian* Women's page profile, as Peggy, Ms Winterson's lover, brings in the tea again while Ms Winterson obligingly explains to her interlocutor how bad modern writing is, that task has become increasingly difficult.

None of it — the fawning interviewers, the tea or even the hauteur that leads Ms Winterson to look down her nose at nearly every living writer — would matter if the books were any good. But *Written On The Body*, which for all its three-year gestation period still manages to read like a hastily written first draft, is an embarrassingly bad novel.

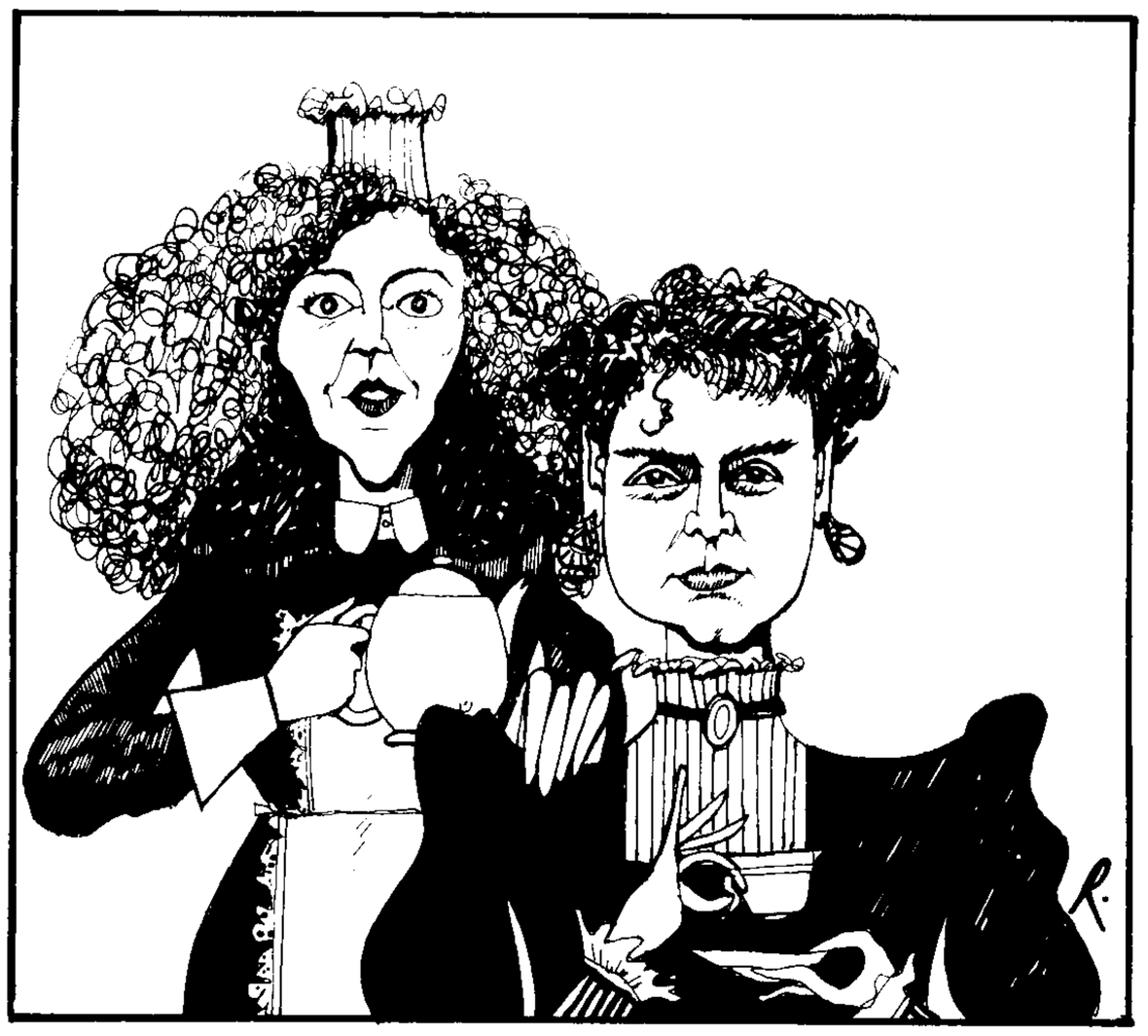
Its plot can be briefly summarised. Girl meets older woman. Each pleasures the other senseless. Alarmed physician husband reveals to girl that her lover has cancer, subsequently detaching her, with girl's acquiescence, for trip to foreign clinic. Girl goes away to Yorkshire where she becomes obsessed with her lover's anatomy ("If I could not put Louise out of my mind I would drown myself in her"), clavicle, scapula and all. Girl comes back to London to find lover supposedly recovered, divorced from husband and vanished, presumably on grounds of girl's betrayal.

A deliciously modern love story? Actually, no. According to the blurb, Winterson has "fused mathematical exactness with poetic intensity and made language new". In fact Winterson has made language very old. Part of this is to do with an addiction to the King James Bible, which leads her into improbable formulations of the "The world will come and go in the tide of a day but here is her hand with my future in its palm" sort, but most of all it is a result of her decision to take the style back into the late Victorian period.

Here, for example, is a description of Louise the lover's mouth: "full, lascivious in its depth, with a touch of cruelty". An early moment of intimacy causes the narrator to reflect that "In the heat of her hands I thought, This is the campfire that mocks the sun". Testimonies to the power of love aren't far behind, naturally enough. "No-one can legislate love; it cannot be given orders or cajoled into service. Love belongs to itself, deaf to pleading and unmoved by violence."

there are the gloriously treacly mental salutations: "Dear friend, let me lie beside you watching the clouds until the earth covers us and we are gone."

Marie Corelli meets the Book of Revelations. And all this from a woman of whom the *Evening Standard* remarked: "Many consider her to be the best living writer in the language." It's not quite Jeanette's fault, of course. Editors these days are so scared of their major authors that they fear to tell them when they've written a turkey. *Written On The Body* consequently takes its place among recent horrors such as Peter Ackroyd's *English Music* and Graham Swift's *Ever After*, novels which one can confidently predict would have been returned to their authors if submitted anonymously. Meanwhile the conspiracy to promote Jeanette Winterson as a major talent continues — one of the most culpable examples of the present tendency to judge a book by criteria other than the ability of the author to write.



Romantic fluff, then, but *old-fashioned* romantic fluff. And for some reason best known to the author this awesome level of sententiousness is maintained to the novel's end. No trick of the late-Victorian lady novelist escapes her. There is the magnificently bad dialogue — "Louise, I don't know what you are. I've turned myself inside out to avoid what happened today. You affect me in ways I can't quantify or contain" /"Forget that you've been here before in other bedrooms in other places. Come to me new."/"You are a pool of clear water where the light plays". And

Books & Bookmen

■ **THE TUSSLE between one of the book world's most important professional Irishmen and a cerebral compatriot looks set to provide the Press Complaints Commission with its most futile investigation yet.**

Pretentious radio pundit Frank Delaney believes a review of his novel *The Sins of the Mothers* **is racist and that the** *Scotsman* **newspaper committed an offence under the race relations act by publishing it. As it happens, the critique was written by Professor Owen Dudley-Edwards, himself an Irishman.**

Having failed to get the Commission for Racial Equality to prosecute the newspaper, Delaney is trying to persuade the Press Complaints Commission to censure the *Scotsman*'s **editor, Magnus Linklater, for not allowing him to "review" Dudley-Edwards's review.**

The offending review took the form of two imaginary Irishmen — Pat and Mike — trying to make sense of Delaney's novel. Dudley-Edwards's big mistake was to take Delaney's absurd book seriously. If he had simply described it as a load of crap rather than trying to satirise it, Delaney would have been denied his attempt at Celtic martyrdom.

☐ BARBARA Jones, fun-loving hackette and former chief reporter of the *Mail on Sunday*, may at last have found a home for her epic unpublished work on Peter Sutcliffe, the Yorkshire Ripper.

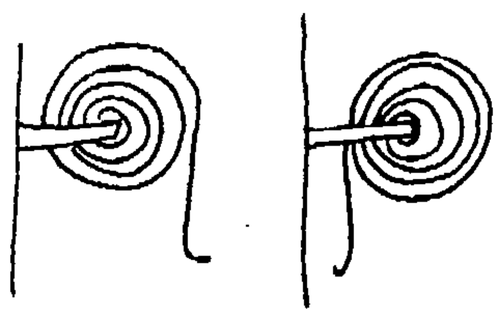
A series of publishing houses such as Random, Weidenfeld's and Headline have, no doubt for trivial reasons, found the book not to their liking. The *Mail on Sunday*, which paid some £25,000 for the serialisation rights, found it altogether too boring.

Now Blake Publications, headed by former *Sunday People* editor John Blake, has agreed to publish Ms Jones's masterpiece. No doubt the legal problems of copyright and her secret tape recordings of conversations with the Ripper have all been overcome.

■ A WEE witch hunt is taking place at HarperCollins' Bangkok House to find the clever laddie who misrouted Eddie Arturo McBastard Bell's four-figure cigar bill last month onto the desk of a bemused junior and underpaid executive who, having been assured that McBastard's cigars were not a legitimate company expense, cheekily forwarded the bill to her chief executive's home address.

☐ **THE STRAIN of running a publishing company is beginning to tell on David Gadsby, managing director of A & C Black (who produce** *Who's Who* **and other such tomes).**

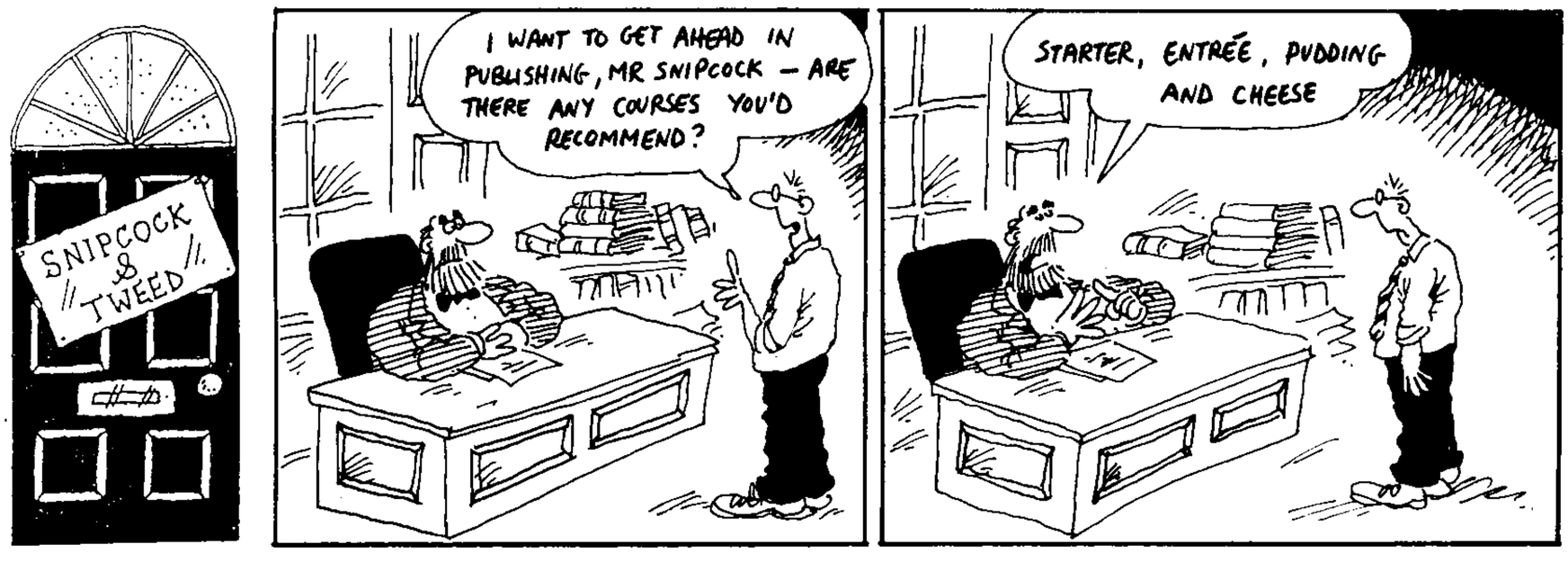
Last month he sent a memo to the company's staff on the important subject of lavatory paper. "Let's all be civilised," he pleaded. "If you finish a roll, put a new one in the holder the correct way round... and throw the old tube in the bin (don't leave it on the window ledge)."



He illustrated the memo with two drawings showing the correct way (left) and the incorrect way (right) of hanging the rolls.

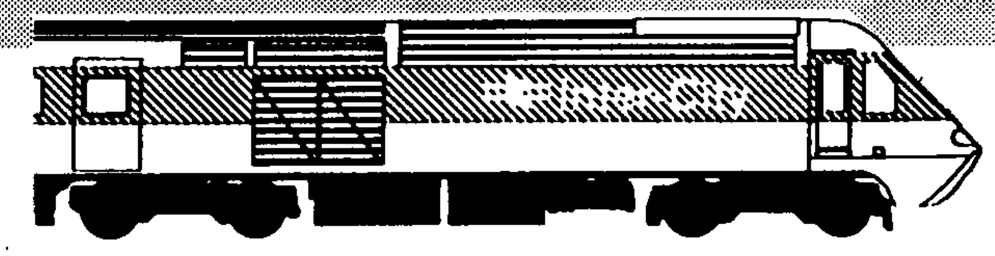
Having delivered himself of this broadside, Gadsby departed on holiday, leaving his staff to wonder what the late Sigmund Freud would have made of it all.

'Bookworm'


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
I WANT TO GET AHEAD IN PUBLISHING, MR SNIPCOCK — ARE THERE ANY COURSES YOU'D RECOMMEND?
STARTER, ENTRÉE, PUDDING AND CHEESE

ON THE RAILWAYS

Richard Branson: Big Mates with the traveller?



HUNDREDS of rail passengers will be inconvenienced next spring when InterCity has to abandon several services simply to satisfy the whims of Richard Branson.

To run his proposed Jacuzzi Wonderland Express between London and Edinburgh, Branson needs three trains. He's not prepared to have them built specially, but he wants the very best. So the whole of BR's InterCity sector is on its knees frantically searching for ways to spare Branson three of Britain's newest and fastest trains, the InterCity 225s.

Leasing him three trains to play with would leave a gaping void in InterCity's London-Edinburgh timetable, so three trains will have to be brought in from elsewhere. The Great Western group of services — Paddington to Bristol, Penzance and Swansea — is to lose one train, so two or three daily services will have to be abandoned. Other regions will suffer similar fates.

In some respects Branson is a godsend for InterCity managers. The Government is forcing InterCity to make a profit, against the odds, but does not specify the minimum number of services InterCity must run to serve the country. So Branson's ransom is a welcome excuse for InterCity to select some of its loss-making services and throw them overboard quickly. In effect, Branson is merely accelerating the process, described in *Eye* 801, of pruning InterCity down to a profitable stump — if there is such a thing.

If rail privatisation is starting as it means to go on — with a carefully-structured national timetable being undermined so resources can be concentrated on a handful of profitable corridors — the sell-off certainly will revolutionise travel: by making rail travel impossible in certain parts of the country.

Meanwhile the train drivers' union ASLEF intends to stop the Virgin Express in its tracks because Branson will not be interested in maintaining BR's current agreements on crews' working conditions. These agreements have evolved over 150 years of railway history — but with safety, not profit, in mind.

Any talk of abandoning agreements, which limit the time a driver can be booked for work to nine hours a day, should set alarm bells ringing. After all, the Clapham Junction disaster was basically caused by personnel being overworked. But Richard Branson is Richard Branson: as unstoppable as one of the express trains he intends to acquire.

Ringing up the fare changes

IT'S official: there are to be no more fare increases on British Rail. Instead, on 27 September there will be the first of many fare "changes".

Appalled at the transparent simplicity of BR's current fares structure, Network SouthEast managers have taken matters into their own hands to bring a touch of adventure to the booking hall.

The plain, unrestricted cheap day return ticket becomes valid only after 9am on Mondays to Fridays; *but* if you're travelling on certain lines from a station within the London area the same ticket is not valid until 9.30am; *but* a new peak day return will replace the cheap day return in the peak hours; *but* it will not be applied where there is a parallel London underground service; *and* there will be a new single ticket for journeys where the cheap day return is the same price as or cheaper than the standard single. Got that?

Passengers will not have to pay significantly more under this plan. The new return ticket will be 5 percent or 20p more than the cheap day return (whichever is the greater), while the new single ticket will result in a modest rise in places. All the same, some NSE fares will consequently be 12 percent higher than in September last year, and the changes "will probably be the precursor to changes in January", according to a letter leaked to *Private Eye*.

Note the use of the word "changes". The reason this alteration is to be a fares "change" is that, under the terms of the laughable passengers' charter, fares will only be increased where there have been recognisable improvements to services. Since there have been no improvements to any NSE services, the latest alteration must be termed a fares "change", not an "increase".

With BR's major investment projects put on ice due to government apathy and indecision, there are unlikely to be any recognisable improvements to services for the foreseeable future — hence no more fares "increases".

Of course the cost of rail travel will continue to shoot up in Britain — which already has the most expensive rail fares in Europe — to keep up with the punitive financial targets set by the Government. But in future people who dare refer to a fares change as a fares "increase" may find themselves in hot water under John Major's unwritten semanticists' and euphemists' charter, designed to get around all the tricky bits in the citizens' charter.

Ill-fated freight

WITH management morale plummeting, Sir "Sunny Bob" Reid of British Rail appears sublimely unaware of the appalling fate that awaits his industry and its "customers".

Reid should have resigned last year when the Government abruptly destroyed all BR's work on a Channel tunnel railway. How much longer can he tolerate the privatisation shambles that is being inflicted on him? There must be some limit to his masochism. Even rail freight, which is supposed to be an easy sell-off, looks doomed as a result of the swift demise of the Charterail venture.

Freight will become even more unviable when an accountants' report (due soon) reveals that track costs have never been properly allocated to freight, which has been carried on the back of the passenger service. Under privatisation, this kind of cross-subsidy would be totally impure.

The irony of the daft rail privatisation plan is that the four new quangos that will replace BR are estimated to require 30 percent more staff than BR presently has.

SERBIAN SANCTIONS

The shirt-lifters of M&S

LAST MONTH, after Marks & Spencer admitted selling school shirts made in a Serbian factory controlled by Slobodan Milosovic, David Sieff of M&S tried to forestall protests by insisting that it was only a tiny order and, besides, it was all in the past.

"Since the factory was solely responsible for stitching the garments, the value of the contract to them was less than £800,000," he wrote in a letter to the *Independent on Sunday*. "All these goods have now been despatched."

This statement, while strictly true, was very far from the whole truth.

Dewhirst, the firm which supplies the shirts to M&S, was granted a special import licence by the department of trade and industry after sanctions were imposed on Serbia and Montenegro on 30 May. The DTI did not renew the licence when it expired on 17 August, the day after Sieff's letter appeared.

What *Sindie* readers would not have guessed from David Sieff's words — "all these goods have been despatched" — was that six British lorry drivers were still inside the former Yugoslavia at that moment, loaded with six out of the 14 lorryloads of shirts for M&S. The total value of the shipment, incidentally, was £10 million — a rather more striking figure than the £800,000 contract mentioned by Sieff.

Having driven from Portugal to the shirt plant at Ivanjica, 130 miles south of Belgrade, the drivers had no conceivable escape from Serbia with their loads. Their special import licence, which was about to expire anyway, had already been rejected as illegal by Hungarian customs officers at the Serbian frontier. The drivers then headed south, away from Britain, into the mountains of Macedonia.

When the *Sindie* published David Sieff's letter, the six lorries, loaded with perhaps £4.2 million-worth of British-owned M&S goods, were parked outside the Milosovic-controlled factory in the lake region of Macedonia, near the Albanian and Greek borders. The drivers waited for four days before word came from Genex, Milosovic's firm in Belgrade, to unload the cargo into store in Macedonia and return empty to their base in Trafford Park, Manchester.

The school shirts, destined to be sold in M&S at prices from £6.99 to £11.99, were last heard of lying in a warehouse in the limbo-land of Macedonia, a fragment of Yugoslavia unrecognised by the European Community, but conveniently free of the UN sanctions imposed on Serbia and Montenegro.

What will happen next? And will the *Sindie* keep its readers informed? After receiving Sieff's letter, the newspaper suddenly lost enthusiasm for pursuing the story. This has nothing to do with the fact that the founder-chairman of the *Independent* and the *Sindie* was Lord Sieff, former boss of Marks and Spencer.

St Michael

WATER BILLS

Add an extra *eau*...

IAN BYATT, regulator of the nation's water supply, has launched an offensive on behalf of the owners of sewers and outfalls, telling the public that it has a choice. Either it can drink the water and swim in it complete with pesticides, or it must pay twice as much in water bills.

In *The Cost of Quality*, a new discussion paper, he hints strongly that the cost of purifying water to meet European standards is more than we can afford. Unfortunately UK water companies had been advertising that British water was "the best in Europe"; and only 24 hours before Byatt issued his paper the Advertising Standards Authority ordered the companies to stop the ads because there was no evidence to support them.

The Byatt report says meeting EC standards would cost £45 billion and double the size of water bills. This is based on guesstimates by the water companies, who have good reason to exaggerate in order to frighten off politicians and the public. Byatt says there has already been "a significant increase in the level of disconnection for nonpayment of bills". Further increases would mean more people would be unable to pay and be cut off. The question will become: would you rather be cut off or poisoned?

At a press conference, Byatt bridled at the idea that our water could be described as poisonous and drank a glass to prove it. Indeed he waxed poetic, claiming that the traces of pesticides in our water were "like an aspirin tablet in an Olympic swimming pool". The standard for water, he said, was 20,000 times stricter than for vegetables.

This was an unfortunate comparison. Friends of the Earth pointed out three months ago that the *combination* of nitrates in vegetables and water meant that many vegetarians were exceeding international safety limits and faced an awkward dilemma: to stop eating vegetables or stop drinking tap water. John Gummer was thus right to claim that vegetarianism was "unnatural": thanks to the intensive agriculture practised by his farmers, which produces high levels of nitrates and pesticides which are beyond safety standards and suspected of causing brain damage in babies, it is.

One implication of Byatt's example is that we should reduce the quality of the water down to the level of the vegetable. This would suit the 39 water companies who were told last month by the Drinking Water Inspectorate that disciplinary action was being considered against 28 of them over breaches in standards. In some cases "it is very probable that water was supplied that was unfit for human consumption", according to Mike Healey, chief inspector.

He won't say which companies are defaulting, but his annual report said that Thames Water had the worst quality record with 5 percent of all its samples below even the UK's present low standard. Five companies had been found with substances in the water described charmingly as faecal coliforms (these are usually produced from the intestines of human beings, but they may come from bird droppings, an item of information some may find comforting).

The latest word from the department of the environment is that no decision on prosecutions has yet been taken, the inspectorate and the companies still being "in discussion".

Byatt, a high-flying monetarist, once worked at the treasury as deputy chief economic adviser and is one of the people to whom we are indebted, if that is the right word, for our present financial situation. (He has also given his name to literature because he was married for 10 years to the Booker-winning novelist, A.S. Byatt.)

As he well knows, the water companies have done very nicely thank you out of privatisation, outperforming the market by 50 percent in a monopoly industry which poses little risk for the investor. Prices have been pushed up at 5 percent a year more than inflation, helping to pay the dividends and top people's stratospheric wages. Even Byatt now says that the rate of return should drop from 12.5 to 5 or 6 percent.

But that is a question of money, which is his subject. Safe levels of pesticides and nitrates are another matter.

HEALTH FRAUD

Chapman and worse

THE fallout continues following the sacking of whistleblowing biochemist Dr Chris Chapman from Leeds General Infirmary (see *Eyes passim*).

A London barrister has gone to Leeds to begin a second investigation into Dr Chapman's allegation of corruption. The inquiry has been launched by Leeds university, some of whose employees work in the LGI's chemical-pathology department.

The university's previous inquiry supported Dr Chapman's claim that fraud had taken place. This caused much embarrassment to the United Leeds Hospitals Trust, which runs the LGI and unsuccessfully tried to persuade Dr Chapman to sign an open letter stating: "After a full investigation and consideration of evidence submitted to my auditors, it has been found that these allegations cannot be substantiated."

Following the removal of the troublesome doctor, it was asked why the auditors, Coopers and Lybrand, found no evidence of fraud. A reply is still awaited.

The people who run the trust — and safeguarded taxpayers' money by sacking Dr Chapman and depriving him of his pension — hope the affair has not damaged their chances of gobbling up the world-acclaimed neurosurgery unit at Pinderfields hospital in Wakefield.

Health secretary Virginia Bottomley will shortly have to rule on a controversial plan by Yorkshire regional health authority to move the unit to the LGI. Critics say vital minutes could be lost as critically ill patients with head injuries become stuck in the Leeds traffic, whereas Pinderfields is easily accessible from nearby motorways and has a helicopter pad 150 metres from the main entrance.

Although more than 25,000 people have signed petitions against the move, the empire-building interests of the LGI are expected to win the day. Certainly it is thought that Bottomley will pay more heed to the regional health chiefs' request than to all the demands for a public inquiry into the Chapman affair which are gathering dust on her desk.

Dr Chapman, meanwhile, is on the dole. Jobs are not in plentiful supply for a skilled 50-year-old biochemist who speaks his mind.

WEST MIDLANDS RHA

Completely mental

FINANCIAL wizards at the West Midlands regional health authority are again set to make huge sums of public money disappear (see *Eyes passim*) — but on a bigger scale than ever before.

Its latest get-rich-quick scheme, under the chairmanship of failed businessman Sir James Ackers, involves shutting the huge Rubery Hill mental hospital, casting its residents into the slums of Brum and flogging off the 207-acre site to developers.

With clever timing, the RHA has chosen the depths of Britain's biggest property slump to go to market. The developer lined up, Charter plc, has produced a whopping deficit and so can no longer afford the land. Undaunted the RHA has decided to pour money once destined for health into knocking down the hospital and building cinemas, restaurants, pubs, offices, industrial units and housing — and, daftest of all, a huge hotel.

Still without the whiff of a buyer, the RHA has sunk hundreds of thousands of pounds into public "consultations" publicising the ludicrously ambitious plans. A quick check around the city shows that hotels are only a third full, there are already plenty of grotty nightspots in more accessible places, and more than a million square feet of offices are empty. At nearby Woodgate Valley, dozens of modern industrial units are also empty.

The RHA scheme is crazy even by the standards of the city council's nutty ruling Labour group, but the RHA has bribed it with promises of road improvements and jobs in one of the city's most deprived areas. Ironically much of the scheme would overlook the infamous Reaside clinic which treats the city's most dangerous psychopaths. Sir James has yet to take up residence...

MENSA

Too many brain sells?

EFFORTS by Mensa, the organisation for those with high IQs (and even higher egos) to expand its membership are becoming increasingly bizarre.

Pseudo-parchment Mensa Merit Certificates have begun arriving at the homes of potential intellectuals throughout Britain.

The onerous requirement for this honour was to solve two problems in the *Sunday Mirror* magazine. The first involved working out the missing number in a small grid, the second deciding that limeade was the odd drink out in a jumbled up list of alcoholic beverages.

According to a letter from Harold Gale BA, Mensa's executive director, "the fact that you managed to correctly answer both of the questions indicates that you have a level of intelligence way above average. I have no hesitation in urging you to take the first steps along the road to join Mensa."

Suspicions that the merit certificates are a ludicrous method of getting the easily impressed to join the society are, however, wide of the mark. An organisation which proudly boasts the involvement of Sir Jimmy Savile OBE KCSG, Garry 'Gonad' Bushell and Sir Clive Sinclair has no need of such tactics.

In the City

A DECISION is expected soon from the Serious Fraud Office as to what, if any, charges to bring against who over the near collapse of Brent Walker.

Fraud squad officers have been probing certain aspects of the life and times of now not so Gorgeous George Walker for a year, and a report on their investigations is believed to have been submitted. The investigation has largely concentrated on two aspects: the £5 million supposedly paid as commissions to Walker's Paris-based associate Michael Eland, which Eland denies ever receiving; and a £7.5 million payment to a New York account at Arab Banking Corporation from Goldcrest Films. ABC was a big lender to Brent Walker and Walker personally, and has ended up with his chateau in France.

"The Prisoner" has already been interviewed twice by the police. Also interviewed has been former Brent Walker finance director Wilfred Aquilina. The word is that after initial hesitation Aquilina has been very helpful, which may be good for him but bad for his one-time boss, who already faces bankruptcy. Another Walker associate relevant to the SFO probe has been John Quested of Goldcrest.

The investigation has been slowed by the necessity to make inquiries abroad and by unravelling the legal niceties of accounting complexity. However, there is confidence that charges will be brought in the near future.

MEANWHILE the Serious Farce Office seems to be digging itself in deeper over its next high profile prosecution — Asil Nadir. Pre-trial hearings in the fraud case against the former Polly Peck boss are due to start this month, but there is increasing doubt that they will be completed in time to make the trial date set for March next year.

Despite pressure from the police, the SFO decided not to bring a conspiracy charge against Nadir, ex-company secretary John Turner and others such as Elizabeth Forsyth and Jason Davies — both out of the country. The SFO argued that there were substantive theft offences (£150 million's worth) and that the conspiracy would have to take in the use of company money for share support operations — a needless complication!

But now a large part of the theft case has been dismissed by the trial judge as flawed in law because the alleged thefts occurred abroad after Nadir had transferred the money from London — as he was authorised to do. The SFO has won a judicial review of that ruling, arguing that it would be a nonsense if the original purpose were to steal, for which no authority could be valid. However, it awaits a hearing date and Nadir's lawyers have made it clear that they will appeal any overturning of the trial judge's decision all the way to the law lords.

It is hard to see how the pre-trial hearing can proceed when most if not all the theft charges may be replaced — the SFO has filed substitute charges, but still wants the originals.

If that were not cause enough for delay, the case is also likely to be affected by a ruling awaited from the law lords in a separate case on another legal point regarding misappropriation. That is not expected to be handed down before possibly November.

All of which makes March 1993 increasingly unlikely and makes the SFO increasingly uneasy. Failure to get a result on Nadir could be a fatal blow worse than Blue Arrow to the shortlived brave new world of fraud prosecution.

THE beginnings of Kevin Maxwell's bid to head off the prospect of heavy time for the crimes of his father Cap'n Rob could be seen on the steps of the high court after he became Britain's biggest ever bankrupt.

Defence plan A will no doubt be the classic blame-the-dead-man gambit. Plan B is to be full of remorse. So an ever so 'umble, penitently bearded even tearful Kevin broke his usual haughty silence to tell the world how he had been publicly humiliated but it was all for a good cause — the aggrieved Maxwell/*Mirror* pensioners. The proceedings were justified despite "the small extent of my estate and assets" by their losses.

The next day's newspapers were full of sympathetic descriptions of his "haunted face" and the burden a bankrupt must bear. (Not as harsh, however, as those who have lost their sole meagre income.)

This was followed by more gushing to the gullible from his wife Pandora — who just happens to own the Oxfordshire house they now live in — about how despite everything they would "muddle through". No doubt a lot better than many pensioners.

So before the rush of sympathy gets out of hand, it is worth recalling the Oscar-winning performance Kevin Maxwell mounted after Cap'n Rob went over the side leaving him and brother Ian to take the £400 million fall. Remember all those financial hacks taken in by the brothers' claims of the robust finances of Maxwell Communications and Mirror Group Newspapers, the absence of problems and their stout defence of their pillaging *père*?

Also remember medical marvel Ernest "Alzheimer" Saunders, whose pre-trial PR campaign about how he was the wronged, broke victim fooled everyone but the jury and Mr Justice Henry.

And Britain's biggest bankrupt can still seem to "muddle through" with the services of Peters & Peters, those stout if highly expensive defenders of alleged white collar criminals (Irish and blacks not a speciality). It is no doubt coincidental that Peters & Peters' Monty Raphael and Keith Oliver acted for Saunders's fellow Ford-bound defendant Tony Parnes and observed the Saunders technique at close quarters.

AN ONION is also necessary to report the personal bankruptcy of City PR man and long time *Eye* favourite John Addey, who does indeed appear to be sufferings from AIDS — Acquired Income Deficiency Syndrome.

Addey's creditors would alas seem unable to attach themselves to his home Canonbury House, said to be on the market at £1.2 million, but then it has supposedly been for sale since at least 1990. Unfortunately the lease was acquired many years ago by a mysterious Swiss company, IMAC, which also acquired the Addey PR business and certain other assets.

All of which makes one wonder what security Addey's bankers thought they had for his "massive private debts". Surely not the word or personal guarantee of a man the court of appeal described as "not to be believed in any particular".

THIS week's interim figures from Fisons will give the new regime an opportunity to deal with City speculation that the drugs group's profits in previous years may have been overstated by the use of some highly creative not to say unusual accountancy techniques.

AND SO for the latest on Philip Green. The Amber Day chairman would seem to pay as close attention to those who write about his company as he does to those who deal in his shares.

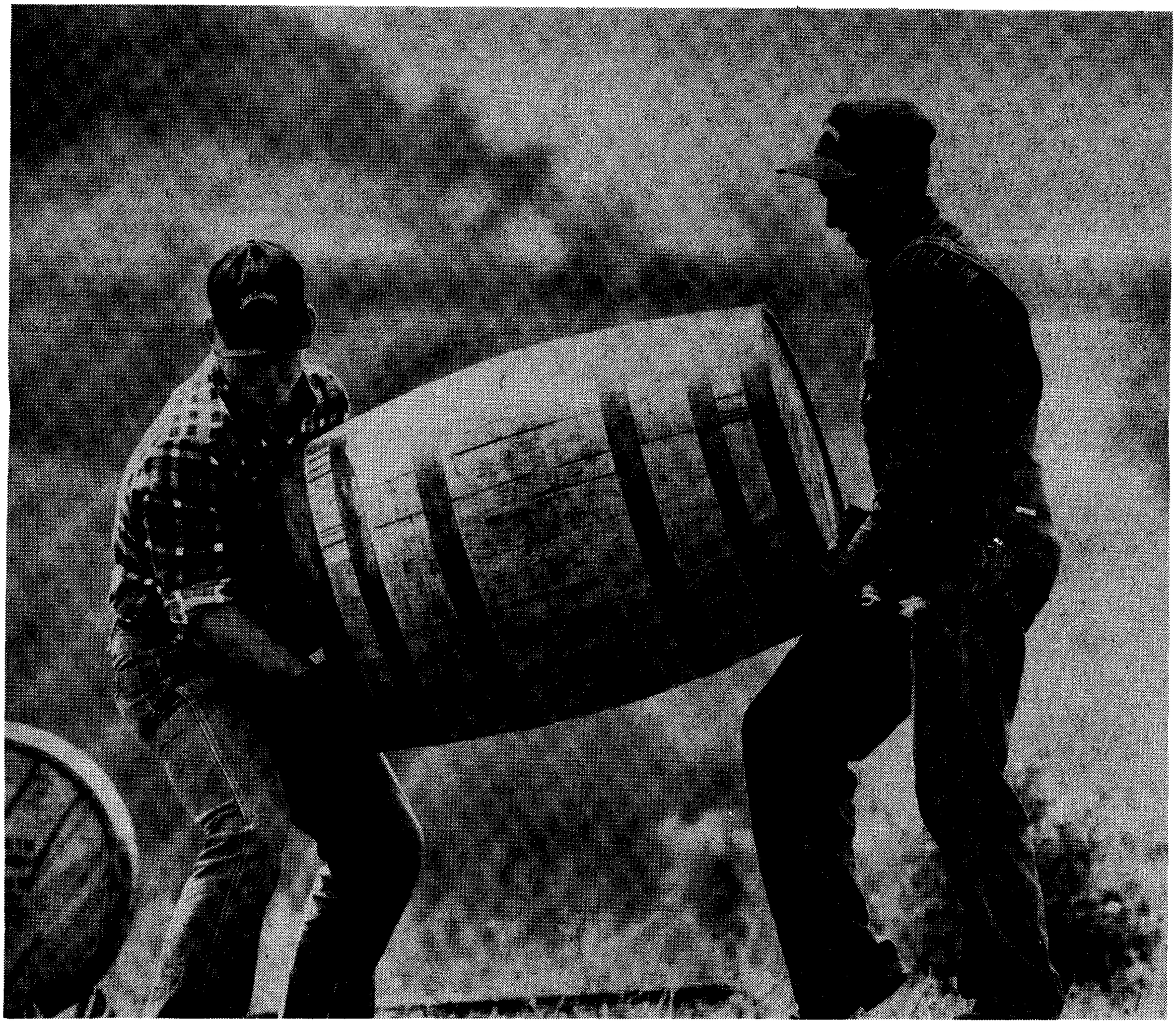
At least two Sunday newspapers were recently surprised to receive a background report on one of their rivals — *Sunday Express* city editor Dominic Prince, no fan of Green. The report, seemingly prepared by a firm of private investigators, gave various personal financial details about Prince of an unflattering nature. Those who received the report by courier were then contacted by Green to assess their reaction. He was somewhat surprised to be told "so what" by at least one City editor.

In his enthusiasm to deal with his enemies it would seem that Green may have also joined the long list of those had over by offshore hoaxer Barry Grey, aka Joe Flynn — he of the "send me £500 and I will tell you all at Amsterdam airport" con.

No doubt what Grey/Flynn had to sell was not the answer to an interesting quiz. What is the connection between:

a) Green; b) Spain; c) A respectable elderly businessman; d) The highly respectable City editor of a Sunday newspaper?

'Slicker'



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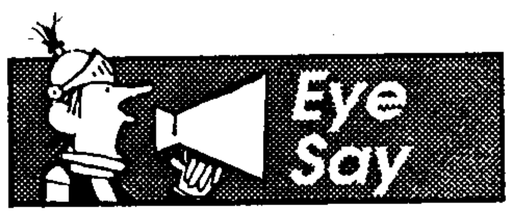

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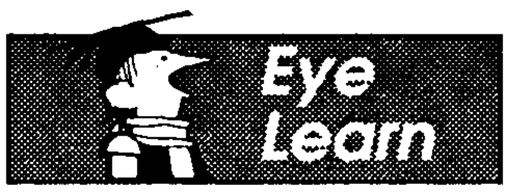

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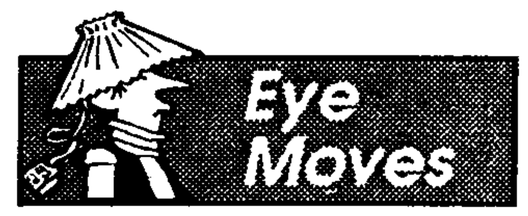

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SHE TOOK ME for everything and ran off with the gardener. All I have left are huge debts. Anything gratefully accepted. Box 5102.

TRAINEE JOURNALIST rejected by LEA and banks needs £790.30 for fees and to pay for this ad. Box 5202.

CAN YOU HELP? Young married couple need £25,000 to buy dream house in France. To be repaid. Box 5302.

DEBT, ILLNESS, unfair dismissal, appeal too late to save home. £15,000 needed by desperate couple. Last hope, please help. Box 5402.

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR needs cash to get business off the ground, any amount gratefully accepted. Box 5502.

MUM WITH YOUNG children desperately needs £5,000. Eternally grateful. Thank you. Box 7102.

FRIENDS. HOLIDAYS. Taverna. Money isn't everything, but £25K will ensure 5 friends for life and a free annual holiday. Please!! Box 7202.

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AMBITIOUS YOUNG GIRL desperately wishes to help on voluntary irrigation project in rural Kenya. £1830 raised, but needs £5000. Contributions large or small gratefully received. Box 0702.

DIRE STRAITS... Student abroad urgently needs £7,000. Dire results — please help. Box 0802.

STUDENT NEEDS £2,200 for Masters fees, sponsorship, donations gratefully received, can verify, will pay back. Box 0902.

BEAUTIFUL YOUNG multitalented circus-skilled poetess desperately needs finance for advertising publication venture. All donations accepted, ALA. Box 1002.

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FILM GRADUATE (1st) seeks £5,000 assistance for M.A. Box 0602.

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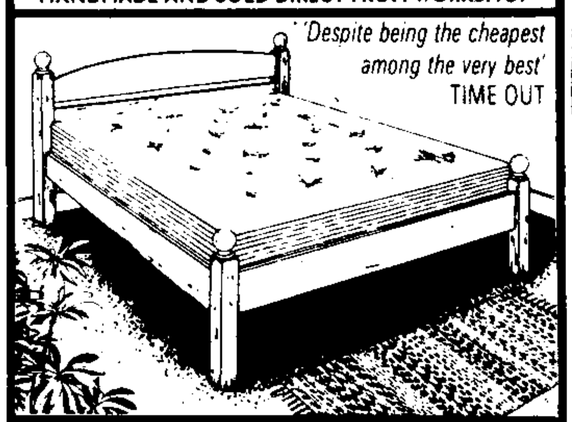

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LAWYER, KEEN TRAVELLER and Russophile, 27, seeks charming and caring professional lady, 22-32, for fun, adventure, companionship and love. Hampshire/anywhere. Box 1702.

27, MALE, own business, graduate, seeks sensible, loyal, affectionate girl to share interests: riding, skiing, golf(!), based in London/Hants. Photo? Box 1802.

KAWASAKI 900R seeks professional lady for pillion seat. Owner's a 29-year-old London based nice guy. No suspension crushers. Box 7702.

ATTRACTIVE BRUNETTE, 25, seeks man to spoil and pamper her with champagne lunches and erotic afternoons. London. Box 6602.

MAN, ENGLISH, excellent condition — seeks Asian woman to discuss meaning of life. Photo plus bio-data please. Box 6702.

SLIM ATTRACTIVE woman seeks flat-sit/flat-share 3/4 nights a week, central London, with civilised man over 50, either as loving friend or on commercial basis, short/long term. Total integrity. Box 1502.

Overseas readers! Remember, you must reply to a Box Number advertiser within 2 months of the advertisement appearing.

GOODLOOKING ROMANTIC professional man, 38, bored stiff in dull marriage seeks attractive female to pamper (London/South East). Box 6802.

ATTRACTIVE LADY 50s (widow) home in lovely W. Sussex and abroad wishes to meet unattached kind cultured gentleman with whom she can share life. Box 7302.

DEVONSHIRE DUMPLING (tasty, plump and 45) seeks "beefy" bloke with whom to simmer gently. Unconventional, unpretentious, non-Tories preferred. Box 7402.

HANDSOME, SOLVENT, married executive (45), slim and fit, enjoys the good things, seeks attractive broadminded lady for wholly sensual affair, possibly to share sensual encounters of the liberated kind. Discretion and SOH fairly essential. Box 7502.

AUTUMN SPECIAL. Could you save a lively mind and attractive body from hibernation? Overworked, 40something, journalistic owner seeks educated, attractive, caring, successful, unattached, n/s man for revitalisation via RFH, NFT, V&A, BM, country walks, talks, travel. Letter and photo ensure reply. Box 7602.

SURREY/SUSSEX MAN (43) 5'10" professional, educated, single, witty, attractive and very solvent seeks wonderful female for conversation, food, fun and sincere relationship. Box 1902.

FED UP and far from home. Young 50, living in Singapore (professional pilot), 2nd hand, part worn and hence not rich. Usual deficiencies and deviations. Would like to meet attractive, interesting ladies when next on leave mid-November. Jerry Hall lookalike (or Jerry Hall herself even) most welcome. Phone and photos exchanged. Lets say 35 to 45. Any status. Me — good sense of humour, slightly right, smart, can't dance. Box 2002.

UNCONVENTIONAL ECLECTIC female, 27, seeks tall handsome n/s male to prove independence isn't everything. Yorks. Box 2102.

TRIATHLETE MALE (30) intelligent, attractive, adventurous, seeks female who enjoys life, travel and sharing. Box 2202.

BEAUTIFUL FAIR English rose, 25, slender, educated, fun, London (loves country) seeks handsome, dashing chap, good background 25-35. Box 2302.

ARE YOU A MAN who likes entertaining friends, socialising, sport especially squash, sunshine, gardens and gardening, hot evenings in the Tuscan countryside, the arts, architecture and history? Are you not afraid to be committed? I'm a graduate, 5'9", slim, striking looks, 39, sincerely seeking someone I can love. Tel. no./details to Box 2402.

5'9" SLIM international Englishman in Monte Carlo seeks 28-35 aged lively sporting lady willing to relocate. Photo appreciated. Replies in English, Italian, French or Spanish welcomed. Box 2502.

ELEGANT, CONTRADICTORY, non-Caucasian female, 31, missing unmarried, attractive, chivalrous type. Detailed letter/recent photo. Box 2602.

HAPPY HANDSOME prosperous 45 year old Scotsman, based W8. Life is good but could be better with a lovely lively intelligent younger lady. Photo essential. Box 2702.

ATTRACTIVE MALE, 31, seeks passionate liaisons with attractive sensual females to recreate "9½ Weeks". Married or single, discreet. Photo please. Cambridge/Suffolk. Box 2802.

UNLOVED SHEFFIELD husband 29 seeks genuine lady who knows the feeling! Discretion assured. Box 2902.

ENIGMATIC CREATIVE man, 46, educated and unconventional, desires a sensual woman penfriend to exchange mutually pleasurable erotic fantasies. Box 6402.

GRADUATE ENGINEER, male 29, intelligent, deep thinker, searching for friendship with romance. Correspondence only initially. Box 6502.

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SOUTH HUMBERSIDE male, 25, hairy, hunky, horny, seeks slim, sensual woman for briefless encounters. Photo appreciated. Box 7902.

PRAGUE DIVORCEE (pharmaceutical saleswoman), basset and two offspring, seeks educated man for English and anatomy lessons, humorously and seriously. Czech me out! Box 8102.

HANDSOME-ISH MAN 27 with "nice eyes" and "biceps the size of Bournemouth" seeks beautiful, sensual, impulsive, slim girl 17-30 to share his life. Photo please. Box 8202.

SLIM, SINGLE, presentable, successful, London based, male professional in late 50s, materially satisfied but lacking that essential, attractive, younger, elegant femae soulmate of any nationality. Telephone number please. Box 8302.

VERY BRIGHT, slightly scatty, attractive career-girl, 26, seeks absolutely unattached male for intellectual foreplay, witty afterplay and passion between. North East. Box 8402.

KISS ME KATE. Romantic Petruchio 45 seeks sassy shrew to tame. Box 8502.

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MALE GENIUS, 44, seeks female genius for full mental intercourse. Foto/fone. Box 1602.

AFFLUENT AND SINGLE businessman, 47, seeks younger attractive female to pamper. London area. Box 9599.

SUCCESSFUL MALE, 40, seeks kind, intelligent female friend. Box 3199.

TALL, HANDSOME, humorous, well-educated and wealthy chap, 34, loves sports, urgently needs very energetic and beautiful girl under 22, London or Hampshire. (Please send photo.) Box 9201.

FREE BUT HAPPY Brahms fan (45, n/s), having savoured solitude, now seeks witty, musical younger woman (possibly Jewish?) for friendship, andante initially. Photo appreciated. London/M4 corridor/W. Country. Box 3802.

MARIANNE FROM Gloucestershire. Yes, please! Love cats, ice cream, letters like that. Own accommodation? Height? Hope you slept well! Box 7999 (previous). Mr Virile impatient for rendezvous. Box 3902.

HEDONISTIC MALE late 30s n/s plenty of wine and song but short of women, looking for a female of 30 to 45 who knows how to enjoy herself, and lives N/E London, East Anglia. Please send photo for discreet reply. Box 4002.

BLACK GUY SEEKS blonde girl under 32.5 yrs for goodies. Box 4102.

BRIGHT ENGLISH ROSE 20-30 sought by interesting and chivalrous gentleman for laughs, adventures, honesty and maybe love. I'll send a photo if you want one. Box 4202.

NYMPHOMANIAC, OWN brewery, seeks attractive guy 30-40 for conversation, alcohol and laughs. Photo appreciated. Box 4302.

VERY PERSONABLE affluent business friends (40s) each seeking delectable damsel for daytime dalliance. Meeting together could be fun. Only the best should apply. Discretion offered, expected. Photo helps. South East. Box 4402.

TALL, ATTRACTIVE female, 25, is looking for loyal reliable man for love and commitment. You must be tall, handsome, well-educated, a professional and have a good sense of fun! (25-33) London/SE. Photo appreciated. Box 4502.

LATE 50-SOMETHING woman, still youthful and attractive, relatively new to London, seeks sympatico companions for mutual enjoyment of music, the arts, plus other social pleasures. Would be delighted to meet a good-looking humorous man — intelligence a must. Box 4602.

IT IS POSSIBLE in a Beetle, but mine is dying! Any male closet hedonists to console me (26)? Box 4702.

PROFESSIONAL INTELLIGENT attractive guy 23 seeks the confidence, elegance and sensual maturity of a beautiful older woman. Hey! It's the nineties. South. Box 4802.

THUG LOOKALIKE, 38, amusing, different, creative, successful and down-under wants feminine, Coronation Street-obsessive penpal (25-40). Send photo (Fergie-esque poses welcome). Box 3002.

WANTED: INDEPENDENT male over 40 (including IQ). Should not pick nose or get paralytic on first date. SW Scotland. Box 3102.

ICE MAIDEN REQUIRED by tall, reserved 36 y.o. man who believes that love and freedom create harmony. Photo please. London. Box 3202.

SOUTH COAST, single, successful, happy chap looking for twenties lady with wit and humour to be frivolous, with phone and photo please. Box 7802.

ATTRACTIVE, INDEPENDENT female (32) seeks intelligent, unattached male, who enjoys sport, travel, theatre, food, wine and is looking for someone special. London area. Box 3302.

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BEEN MARRIED, done that! Successful generous professional (Midlands 43) seeks lovely lady 18-40 for unashamedly hedonistic and sensuous relationship. Box 3402.

VERY ATTRACTIVE, classy girl, 32, working in the arts; dynamic, successful, solvent, clever and kind (normally modest too) wants to meet interesting, single, sincere, handsome, liberal lively lawyer/barrister 30-39 for in-depth briefings in chambers, and possible partnership. Discretion guaranteed beyond reasonable doubt. London. Box 3502.

DUBAI OR NOT Dubai? Male expat, 30, seeks transient female travellers for far-away fun. Own tent not necessary. UAE. Box 3602.

BEFORE I'M too old! Man, 33, seeks older woman (40-53) for discrete affair. Box 3702.

LIVELY, BRIGHT, bubbly female, 40, seeks sophisticated man of integrity man. South Wales. Box 4902.

FEMALE, 34, HAPPY attractive blonde with loving young daughter seeks stable professional gentleman as life partner and best friend. Photo please. Box 5002.

"IN PRAISE of Older Women". Tall, slim, successful married man, 48, seeks discreet relationship. Am I unusual in preferring mature ladies with a fuller figure? London/S. East. Box 5602.

AMBITIOUS MIDLANDS man, 40, seeks attractive unattached unconventional younger lady for exciting times! Box 5702.

HAPPY BUT OVERWORKED doctor, 33, seeks graduate woman, 24-34, to share conversation, concerts, cinema, closeness. Oxford. Photo/phone appreciated. Box 5802.

MAJORCA — RESIDENT 45 writer seeks Her! Youngish intell. different. Address please. Box 5902.

LIQUIDATOR, 33, very solvent, handsome, charming. Relief from bankruptcy, assets unfrozen for ladies 25-35, Wilts, Berks, Oxon. Photo ensures immediate dividend. Box 6002.

SHY GUY 23 tall dark and, well you tell me, romantic, imaginative, intelligent, budding writer, seeks lady of any age to open my eyes to an adventure. Photo appreciated. Box 6102.

I'M NOT A WEALTHY businessman looking for a discreet affair. I'm 42 male single professional and looking for an attractive intelligent female who might want a normal relationship. Box 6202.

YOUNG LAWYER seeks mature buxom lady for discreet frolics. Manchester/North West. Photo and phone number please. Box 6302.

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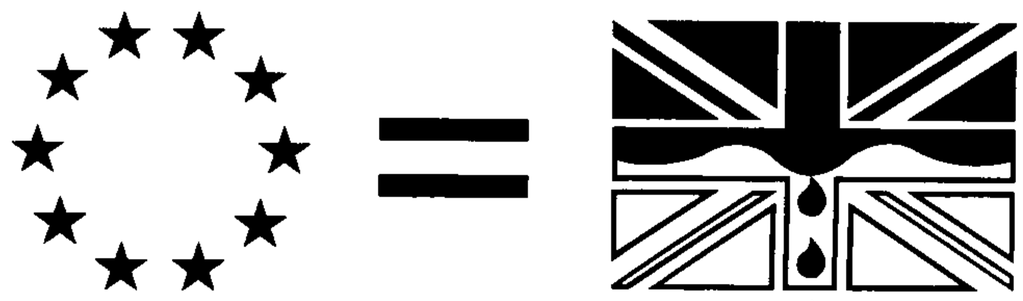

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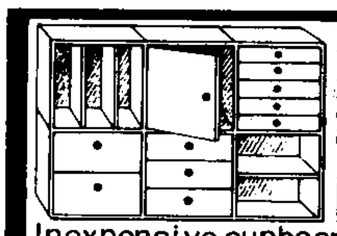

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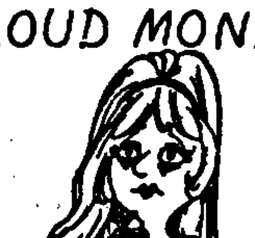

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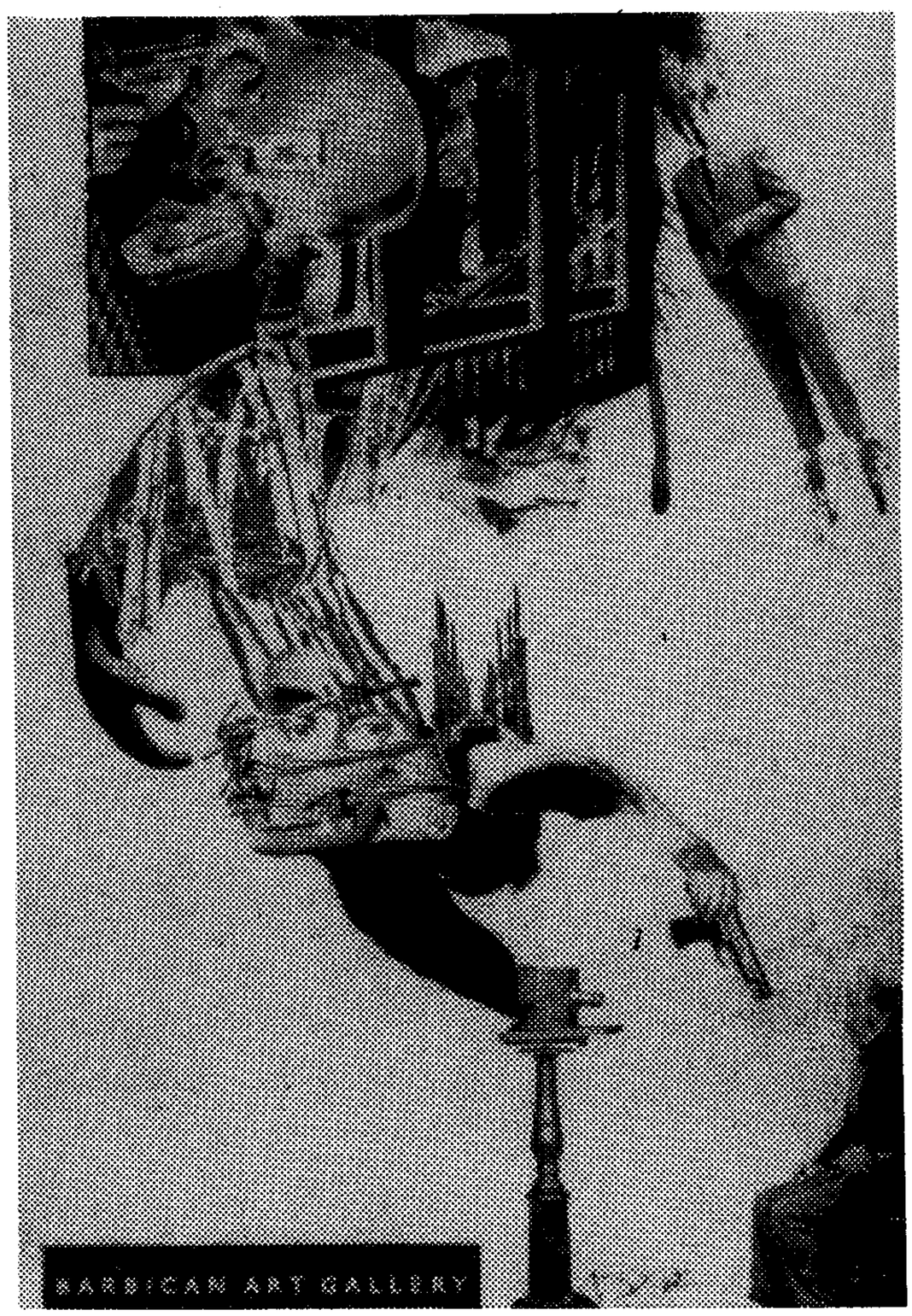

Ralph Steadman, The Hollow Suit, 1992.

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